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Adventure Guide

Munich & Bavaria

Henrik Bekker

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Adventure Guide

Munich & Bavaria

Henrik Bekker

HUNTER

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4 3 2 1

Contents

Introduction **1**
- History 5
    - The Bavarians 7
    - Early History 8
    - Duchy of Bavaria 8
    - Electoral Bavaria (1623-1805) 9
    - The Kingdom of Bavaria (1806-1918) 11
    - The 20th Century 13
- Culture 14
    - Artists 14
    - Architecture 17
    - Music 21
    - Literature 23
- Geography 25
- Climate 26
- Government 27
- The Economy 27
- Top Attractions 28
    - Top Destinations 28
    - Great Churches 30
    - Great Museums 31
    - Great Castles 32
    - Great Palaces 33

Travel Information **35**
- Fast Facts 35
    - Population 35
    - Location 35
    - Major cities 35
    - Time Zone 36
- Orientation 36
    - When to Go 36
    - Customs & Immigration 36
    - Getting Here 36
    - Getting Around 38
        - By Rail 38
        - By Bus 40
        - By Car 40
        - By Air 43
        - By Boat 43
        - By Taxi 43
    - Embassies & Consulates 44
- Money 44
    - Currency 45
    - Taxes 45
    - Tipping 45

Food & Drink 46
Electricity 47
Media 47
Medical 47
Restrooms 48
Shopping 48
Telephones 49
Mail 49
Dates & Time 49
Costs 50
  Accommodations 50
  Restaurants 52
  Sightseeing & Events 53
Holidays 54
Adventures 56
Special Interest 57
  Senior Citizens 57
  Children 57
  Disabled 57
Information Sources 58
Language 58
  A Few Useful Words 59

Munich 63
Information Sources 65
Getting Around 65
Sightseeing 65
  Old Town Pedestrian Zone 65
  Englischer Garten & Schwabing 73
  Deutsches Museum 76
  Pinakotheken Viertel & Königsplatz 76
  Olympiagelände & BMW 78
  Schloss Nymphenburg 79
  Farther Afield 81
    Dachau 81
    Schleißheim 82
    Freising 83
Cultural Events 85
Festivals 86
  Oktoberfest 86
  Auer Dult Festivals 88
Shopping 88
Adventures 89
  On Foot 89
    Town Walks 89
  On Wheels 89
    By Bicycle 89
    By Inline Skating 90
    By Tour Bus 90
    By Taxi 90
    By Horse-Drawn Carriage 91

In Water 91
Where to Stay 92
Luxury Hotels & Restaurants 92
Old Town Area 93
Hauptbahnhof Area 94
Englischer Garten 96
Schwabing 96
Munich Airport/Freising 97
Youth Hostels 98
Camping 99
Where to Eat 100
Where to Eat in Schwabing 102
Cafés 102
Beer Halls & Beer Gardens 103

Oberbayern/Upper Bavaria 107

Fünfseenland (Five Lakes Country) 108
Information Sources 110
Getting Around 110
Sightseeing 111
Starnberger See 111
Ammersee 115
Cultural Events 118
Festivals 118
Shopping 118
Adventures 119
On Foot 119
On Wheels 119
In the Air 120
On Water 120
Where to Stay & Eat 121
Starnberg 121
Berg 121
Feldafing 122
Andechs 122
Dießen 122
Youth Hostel 123
Camping 123
Zugspitz Region 123
Tourist Office 124
Getting Around 124
Garmisch-Partenkirchen 124
Garmisch-Partenkirchen 124
Mittenwald 126
Ettal 127
Linderhof 128
Oberammergau 129
Wieskirche 130
Murnau on the Staffelsee 130
Information Sources 130
Sightseeing 130

    - Festivals 132
    - Shopping 132
    - Adventures on Foot 133
        - Town Walks 133
        - Countryside Hikes & Mountaineering 133
    - Adventures on Wheels 134
        - By Bicycle 134
    - Adventures in the Air 134
        - Cable Cars 134
        - Hangliding & Paragliding 136
    - Adventures on Horseback 138
    - Adventures on Water 138
        - Boat Rental 138
        - Rafting 138
    - Adventures on Snow 138
        - Alpine Skiing 138
        - Cross-Country Skiing 139
        - Ice Skating 139
        - Rental Equipment & Ski Schools 139
        - Snowboarding 139
        - Tobogganing 139
    - Where to Stay & Eat 141
        - Partenkirchen 141
        - Garmisch 142
        - Oberammergau 143
        - Ettal 144
        - Ettal-Linderhof 144
        - Murnau 144
        - Youth Hostels 145
        - Camping 146
- Upper Bavaria South of Munich 147
    - Getting Around 147
    - Kochelsee 148
        - Information Sources 148
        - Sightseeing 149
        - Cultural Events 151
        - Adventures on Foot 152
        - Adventures on Wheels 152
        - Adventures in the Air 152
        - Adventures on Water 153
        - Spas 153
        - Where to Stay & Eat 153
    - Tegernsee-Schliersee-Wendelstein 155
        - Information Sources 156
        - Tegernsee 156
        - Schliersee 158
        - Bayrischzell 159
        - Cultural Events 159
        - Festivals 159
        - Shopping 159

- Adventures on Foot 159
- Adventures on Wheels 160
- Adventures in the Air 160
- Adventures on Water 161
- Adventures on Snow 161
- Where to Stay & Eat 162

Eastern Upper Bavaria 167
- The Inn Valley 168
  - Information Sources 168
  - Getting Around 168
  - Wasserburg 168
  - Rott am Inn 170
  - Altötting 171
  - Marktl 173
  - Burghausen 174
  - Festivals 177
  - Shopping 177
  - Adventures 177
  - Where to Stay & Eat 178
- Chiemsee 180
  - Tourist Information 180
  - Getting Around 180
  - Prien 181
  - Chiemsee Islands 181
  - Seebruck 184
  - Seeon 184
  - Amerang 185
  - Cultural Event 186
  - Adventures on Wheels 186
  - Adventures in the Air 187
  - Adventures on Water 187
  - Where to Stay & Eat 188

Berchtesgadener Land 191
- Information Sources 192
  - Tourist Office 192
- Getting Around 192
- Bad Reichenhall 192
  - Tourist Office 192
  - Sightseeing 193
- Berchtesgaden Town 193
- Obersalzberg 194
- Königssee 196
  - Where to Eat 198
- Ramsau 198
- Cultural Events 198
- Shopping 198
- Adventures 199
  - On Foot 199
  - On Wheels 200
  - In the Air 203

On Water 203
With Horses 204
On Snow & Ice 204
Where to Stay & Eat 206
Bad Reichenhall 206
Youth Hostels 209
Camping 209

Ostbayern (Eastern Bavaria) 211
Information Sources 212
Niederbayern (Lower Bavaria) 212
Landshut 212
Information Sources 213
Getting Around 213
Sightseeing 213
Festivals 217
Adventures on Foot 218
Adventures on Wheels 218
Where to Stay & Eat 219
Danube Valley 221
Getting Around 222
Adventures 222
Ingolstadt 223
Tourist Office 223
Getting Around 223
Sightseeing 224
Cultural Events 228
Shopping 228
Adventures on Foot 228
Adventures on Wheels 228
Where to Stay & Eat 228
Kelheim 230
Tourist Office 231
Getting Around 231
Sightseeing 231
Adventures on Wheels 236
Adventures on Water 236
Where to Stay & Eat 236
Regensburg 237
Information Sources 238
Getting Around 238
Sightseeing 238
Walhalla 243
Cultural Events 243
Shopping 244
Adventures on Foot 244
Adventures on Wheels 244
Adventures in the Air 244
Adventures on Water 244
Where to Stay & Eat 245
Straubing 247

      Tourist Office 248
      Sightseeing 248
      Cultural Events 250
      Festivals 250
      Adventures on Foot 250
      Adventures on Wheels 251
      Adventures in the Air 251
      Where to Stay & Eat 251
    Deggendorf 252
      Tourist Office 252
      Getting Around 252
      Sightseeing 252
      Adventures 255
      Where to Stay & Eat 255
    Passau 256
      Tourist Office **258**
      Getting Around 258
      Sightseeing 258
      Cultural Events 261
      Adventures 262
      Where to Stay & Eat 263

Franken & Nürnberg 265
  History 266
  Tourist Office 267
  Getting Around 267
    By Rail 267
    By Road 268
    By Air 268
  Nürnberg (Nuremberg) 269
    Information Sources 270
    Getting Around 271
    Sightseeing 271
      St Lorenzkirche Area 271
      Hauptmarkt Area 273
      Kaiserburg 275
      Dürer-Museum Area 276
      Weisser Turm Area 278
      German National Museum Area 279
      Nazi Sights 280
      The Nuremberg Trials 282
    Cultural Events 283
    Festivals 284
    Shopping 284
    Adventures on Foot 285
      Town Walks 285
    Adventures on Wheels 285
      By Bicycle 285
      By Motorized Train 285
    Adventures in the Air 285
    Where to Stay & Eat 286

- Station Area 286
- Old Town 287
- Bratwurst Restaurants 288
- Youth Hostel 289
- Camping 289

Oberfranken/Upper Franconia 291

- Bamberg 291
  - Information Sources 292
  - Getting Around 292
  - Sightseeing 292
    - Inselstadt 293
    - Bergstadt 294
    - Farther Afield 300
  - Cultural Events & Festivals 303
  - Shopping 304
    - Antiques 304
  - Adventures 304
    - On Foot 304
    - On Wheels 305
  - Where to Stay & Eat 305
    - Traditional Brewery Taverns 307
    - Youth Hostel 307
    - Camping 307
- Coburger Land 308
  - Coburg 309
    - Information Sources 309
    - Getting Around 309
    - Sightseeing 310
  - Neustadt bei Coburg 317
  - Cultural Events 317
  - Festivals 318
  - Adventures 318
    - On Foot 318
    - On Wheels 319
    - Wildlife 319
  - Where to Stay & Eat 320
    - Youth Hostels 321
    - Camping 321
- Frankenwald 322
  - Tourist Office 322
  - Getting Around 322
    - Railways 322
    - Road 322
  - Kronach 323
    - Tourist Office 323
    - Old Town 323
    - Festung Rosenberg 325
    - Mitwitz 326
  - Kulmbach 326
    - Tourist Office 327

- Old Town 327
- Plassenburg 328
- Cultural Events 329
- Festivals 329
- Shopping 330
- Adventures 330
  - On Foot 330
  - On Wheels 331
  - On Water 332
  - On Snow 332
- Where to Stay & Eat 332
  - Kronach 332
  - Kulmbach 333
  - Youth Hostels 334
  - Camping 334
- Bayreuth 334
  - Tourist Office 334
  - Getting Around 335
  - Sightseeing 335
    - Old Town 335
    - Wagner Sites 338
    - The Ermitage 339
  - Cultural Events & Festivals 340
  - Adventures 340
    - On Foot 340
    - On Wheels 341
    - On Water 341
  - Where to Stay & Eat 341
    - Near Bayreuth 343
    - Youth Hostels 344

Unterfranken/Lower Franconia 345

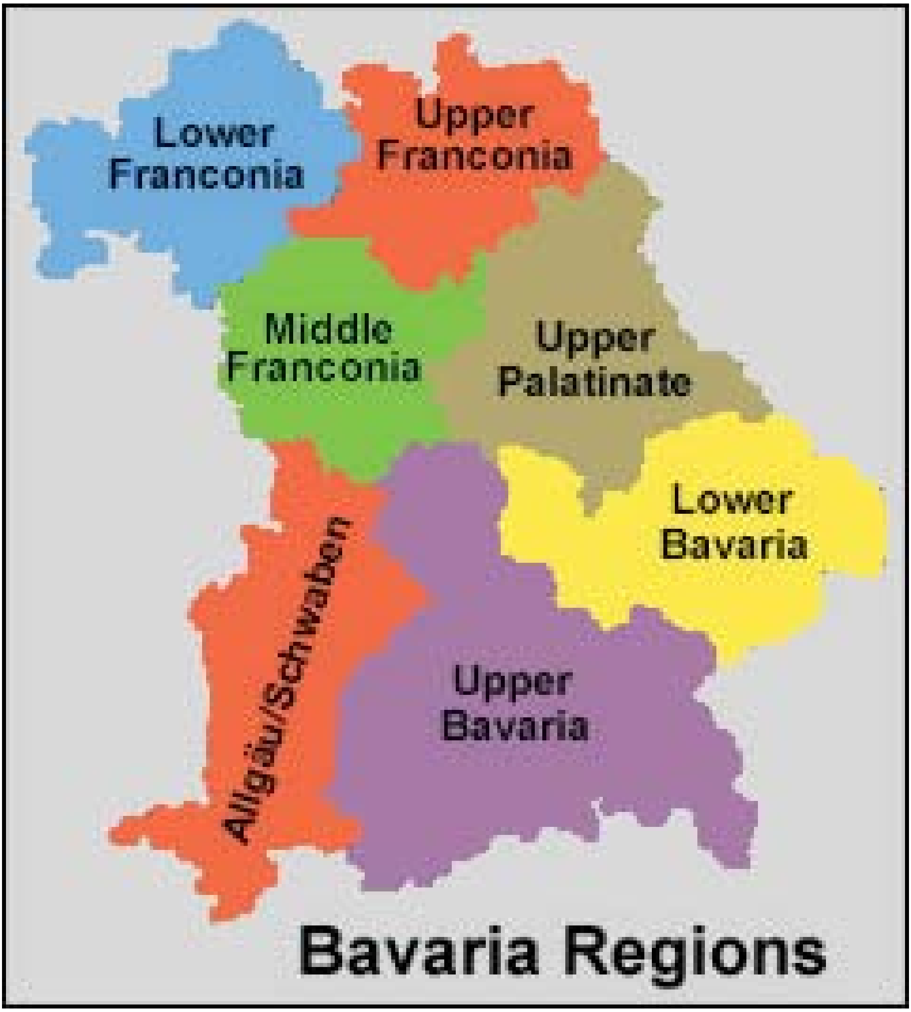
- Würzburg 345
  - Tourist Office 346
  - Getting Around 346
  - Sightseeing 346
    - Residenz 346
    - East Bank & Old Town 349
    - West Bank & Marienberg 353
    - Farther Afield 355
  - Cultural Events 355
    - Wine Festivals 356
  - Adventures 356
    - On Foot 356
    - On Wheels 357
    - In the Air 357
    - On Water 357
  - Where to Stay & Eat 358
    - Old Town Center 358
    - Left Bank 358
    - Youth Hostel 359

- Camping 359
- Fränkische Weinland (Franconian Wine Land) 359
  - Tourist Office 360
  - Getting Around 360
  - Sommerhausen 360
    - Tourist Office 360
    - Old Town 360
  - Ochsenfurt 361
    - Tourist Office 361
    - Old Town 361
  - Tückelhausen 362
  - Frickenhausen 363
  - Marktbreit 363
    - Tourist Office 363
    - Old Town 363
    - Farther Afield 364
  - Kitzingen 365
    - Tourist Office 365
    - Old Town 365
  - Etwashausen 366
  - Sulzfeld 366
  - Iphofen 367
    - Tourist Office 368
    - Old Town 368
  - Mönchsondheim 370
  - Mainbernheim 370
  - Dettelbach 370
    - Tourist Office 370
    - Old Town 371
  - Volkach 371
    - Tourist Office 371
    - Old Town 372
    - St Maria im Weingarten 372
  - Gaibach 372
  - Schweinfurt 373
    - Tourist Office 373
    - Old Town 373
  - Cultural Events 375
  - Festivals 375
  - Wine Tasting 375
  - Adventures 375
  - Where to Stay & Eat 377
    - Sommerhausen 377
    - Ochsenfurt 377
    - Sulzfeld 378
    - Iphofen 378
    - Dettelbach 378
    - Volkach 379
    - Youth Hostels 380
    - Camping 380

Mittelfranken 381
- Romantische Straße (Romantic Road) 381
  - Information Sources 382
  - Getting Around 382
  - Rothenburg to Dinkelsbühl 383
    - Getting Around 383
    - Rothenburg ob der Tauber 383
  - South of Rothenburg 393
    - Schillingsfürst 393
    - Feuchtwangen 394
    - Dinkelsbühl 396

Allgäu & Bayerisch-Schwaben (Bavarian Swabia) 401
- Information Sources 402
- Getting Around 402
- Southern Romantic Road 402
  - Ries-Danube Region 403
    - Information Sources 403
    - Getting Around 403
    - Nördlingen 403
    - Wallerstein 406
    - Bopfingen-Baldern 406
    - Harburg 407
    - Donauwörth 407
    - Cultural Events 409
    - Adventures on Foot 409
    - Adventures on Wheels 409
    - Adventures on Water 410
    - Where to Stay & Eat 410
  - Augsburg 412
    - Tourist Office 413
    - Getting Around 413
    - Sightseeing 413
    - Farther Afield 418
      - Friedberg 418
    - Cultural Events 420
    - Adventures on Foot 420
    - Where to Stay & Eat 420
    - Youth Hostel 421
    - Where to Eat 422
    - Camping 422
  - Landsberg am Lech 422
    - Tourist Office 423
    - Getting Around 424
    - Sightseeing 424
    - Cultural Events 426
    - Adventures on Foot 427
    - Adventures on Wheels 427
    - Where to Stay & Eat 427
  - Pfaffenwinkel 428

      Tourist Office 428
      Getting Around 428
      Hohenfurch 428
      Schongau 429
      Peiting 430
      Rottenbuch 431
      Steingaden 431
      Cultural Events 433
      Adventures on Foot 434
      Adventures on Wheels 434
      Adventures in the Air 435
    Schwangau & Füssen 435
      Getting Around 435
      Schwangau 436
      Füssen 438
      Cultural Events 440
      Adventures on Foot 440
      Adventures on Wheels 440
      Adventures in the Air 441
      Adventures on Water 441
      Adventures on Snow & Ice 442
      Where to Stay & Eat 443
  Allgäu 445
    Kempten 445
      Tourist Office 446
      Getting Around 446
      Sightseeing 446
      Cultural Events 449
      Adventures on Foot 449
      Where to Stay & Eat 449
    Unterallgäu 450
      Information Sources 450
      Getting Around 451
      Memmingen 451
      Ottobeuren 455
      Cultural Events 457
      Festivals 457
      Adventures on Foot 457
      Adventures on Wheels 458
      Where to Stay & Eat 458
Suggested Reading 459


Lower Franconia
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Middle Franconia
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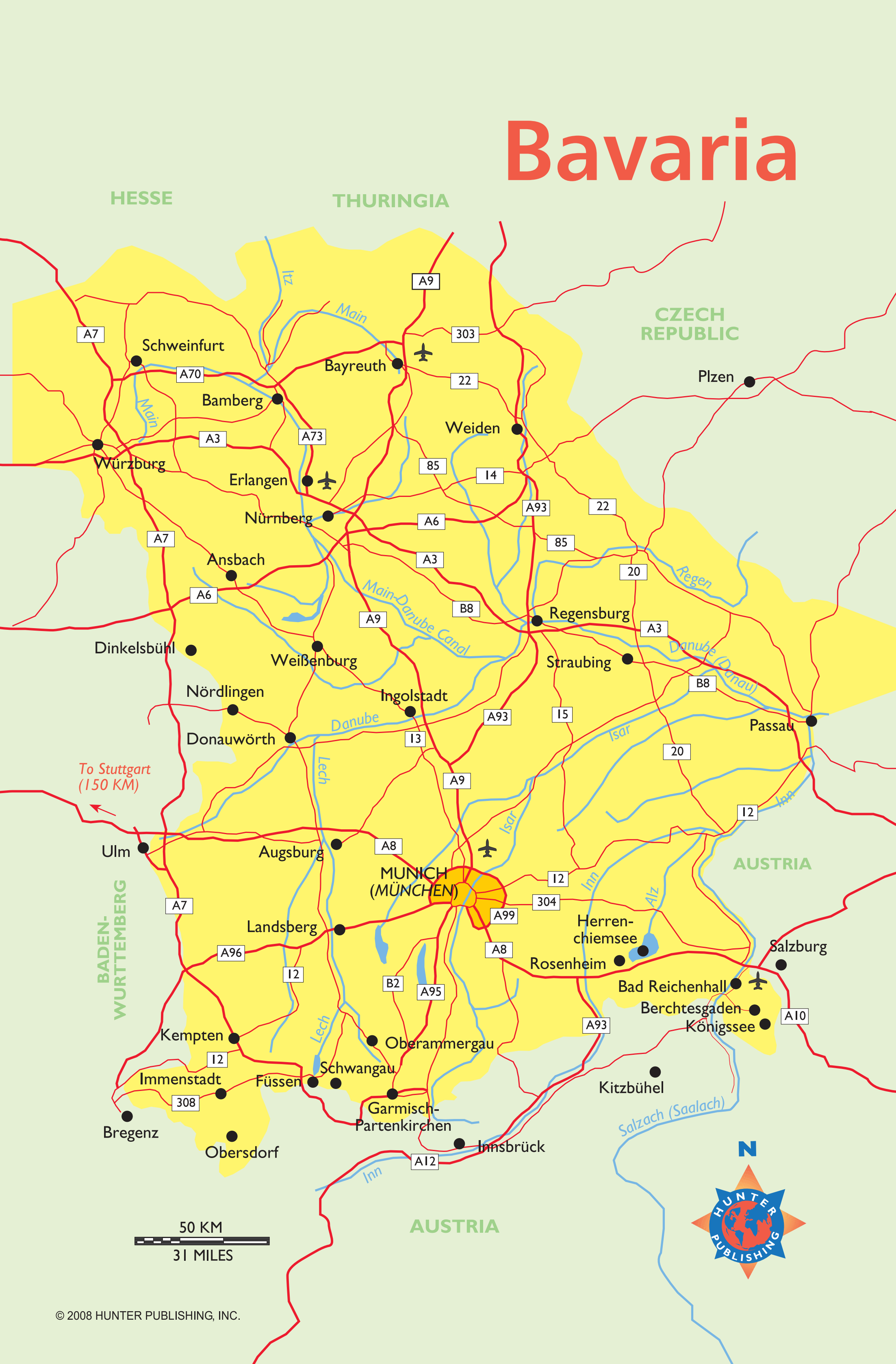
Allgäu/Schwaben
Upper Bavaria
Bavaria Regions



Bavaria

HESSE
THURINGIA
CZECH REPUBLIC
Plzen
Itz
Main
A9
303
A7
Schweinfurt
Bayreuth
A70
22
Bamberg
Main
Weiden
A3
A73
Würzburg
85
14
Erlangen
Nürnberg
A93
22
A6
A7
85
Ansbach
A3
20
Regen
A6
Main-Danube Canal
B8
Regensburg
A9
A3
Dinkelsbühl
Weißenburg
Straubing
Danube (Donau)
B8
Nördlingen
Ingolstadt
A93
15
Passau
Danube
Donauwörth
13
Isar
20
Lech
To Stuttgart
(150 KM)
A9
12
Inn
Isar
Ulm
Augsburg
A8
AUSTRIA
MUNICH
(MÜNCHEN)
12
BADEN-WURTTEMBERG
A7
304
Inn
Alz
A99
Landsberg
Herren-
chiemsee
Salzburg
A96
A8
Rosenheim
12
B2
A95
Bad Reichenhall
Berchtesgaden
Lech
A93
Königssee
A10
Kempten
Oberammergau
12
Schwangau
Immenstadt
Füssen
Kitzbühel
308
Garmisch-
Partenkirchen
Bregenz
Salzach (Saalach)
Innsbrück
Obersdorf
A12
Inn
N
AUSTRIA
50 KM
31 MILES
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Introduction

Bavaria is by far the most popular destination in Germany for both international and domestic tourists. This is no real surprise as the state seamlessly integrates such a wide range of attractions, from historical sights to beautiful nature, high culture to the most popular international artists, relaxation in world-class spas to active hiking, cycling, mountain climbing, and skiing.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- **History** 5
- **Culture** 14
- **Geography** 25
- **Climate** 26
- **Government** 27
- **The Economy** 27
- **Top Attractions** 28

Bavaria has an interesting and complex history, which left it with numerous castles, palaces, monasteries, churches, and historical towns. Its rivers, traditionally creators of wealth through trade and transportation, offer great opportunities for watersports as well as easy cycling and hiking routes. The Alps are famous for winter sports while several other, mostly forested mountain ranges are scattered through Bavaria.

Bavarians are generally somewhat conservative and preserve their traditions. Traditional dress (*Trachten*) is worn at numerous local festivals while lederhosen are still often worn in rural areas as practical daily clothing. Bavarians are proud to be Bavarian and the blue-and-white Bavarian standard is proudly displayed.

Bavaria is a very easy region to travel in. Public transportation and tourism facilities are generally excellent. Most persons in the tourism industry speak good English and Bavarians in general speak English well. Prices for accommodation, food, and entry fees are often surprisingly low.

This guide starts with the capital, Munich, moves south to Upper Bavaria and then counter-clockwise through Eastern Bavaria and the three Franconia regions, before concluding with the Allgäu and Bavarian-Swabia in southwestern Bavaria.

Munich

Neues Rathaus *(Fritz Mader/FVAMuc)*

Munich (*München*) is the state capital and the premier destination. Despite World War II damage, it has numerous historical buildings. A true highlight is the astonishing range of excellent museums, ranging from fine arts to technology. Munich has pleasant beer gardens and beer halls as well as numerous restaurants – from international fast-food chains to haute cuisine. It has a wide range of cultural offering. About 3,000 Oktoberfests are held annually around the world but only Munich has the real one. In Bavaria, all roads (and railways) lead to Munich, making it an excellent base from which to explore the rest of the state – many sights can easily be explored on a daytrip from the capital.

Oberbayern

Oberbayern (Upper Bavaria) is for many the essence of Bavaria. Lakes, rivers, meadows, and green rolling hills make up most of the region, with the Alps an ever-present feature on the horizon. The region includes famous Alpine resorts such as **Berchtesgaden**, **Reit im Winkl**, and **Garmisch-Partenkirchen**, as well as the **Chiemsee** and **Starnberger See**, Bavaria's most famous lakes. Architectural highlights include monasteries (Ettal, Andechs, Benediktbeuren), marvelous churches (Wieskirche, Rott am Inn, Schäftlarn), and opulent palaces (Herrenchiemsee, Linderhof). A new attraction is Marktl, where Pope Benedict XVI was born.

Ostbayern

Ostbayern (East Bavaria) is often overlooked by foreign tourists. The Danube is the main geographical feature and, not surprisingly, major historical towns are found on its banks. Foremost are **Regensburg** with its medieval core and the mostly Baroque **Passau** – both cities escaped the Second World War undamaged. Regensburg has the largest Gothic cathedral in Bavaria, while Passau has the largest Baroque one in Germany and the largest pipe organ in the world.

Franken & Nürnberg

Franken (Franconia) covers the northern half of Bavaria, although there has not been a united Franken region for around a millennium. It is an area rich in history and beautiful nature part of Bavaria since the early 19th century. This guide divides the region according to the three administrative regions plus Nürnberg, rather than the official 15 tourism regions.

View of Kaiserburg in Nürnberg from Tiergärtnerplatz *(www.tourismus.nuernberg.de)*

Franken does not have a capital and Bavaria's second-largest city, **Nürnberg** (Nuremberg) has no special administrative status. However, it is a tourism giant with very interesting sights. Most of its historical core was extensively damaged in air raids in 1945 but many buildings have been restored, including several churches and the strong Kaisersburg castle. The German National Museum here has the largest collection of German cultural and art objects in the world bar none. Also very interesting is the area where the Nazis held their annual rallies.

Oberfranken

Oberfranken (Upper Franconia) is rich in culture and natural beauty. **Bamberg** has a marvelous historical core that is on the UNESCO Cultural Heritage List. **Coburg**, with its strong links to the British monarchy, joined Bavaria only in 1920. It has a mighty castle, as do the nearby towns **Kronach** and **Kulmbach**. **Bayreuth** is most famous as the seat of the annual Wagner Festival but also has impressive Rococo palaces.

Maria im Weingarten Chapel, Volkach, Unterfranken *(www.volkach.de)*

Unterfranken

Unterfranken (Lower Franconia) is Bavaria's principle wine-producing region, especially on the banks of the ever-meandering Main River. Most of the region was traditionally ruled by the bishop of Würzburg and has numerous Renaissance *Rathäuser* (Town Halls) and Baroque churches. Despite severe bomb damage in 1945, **Würzburg**, the largest town in the region, is well worth a visit to see the amazing Baroque Residence and sculptures by Tillman Riemenschneider.

Mittelfranken

Mittelfranken (Middle Franconia) has some of the most romantic sights in Germany. The Romantic Road holiday route passes through this area with the most famous walled-in medieval town in Germany, **Rothenburg ob der Tauber**, overrun by tourists but still absolutely worth a visit.

The Allgäu & Bayerisch-Schwaben

The Allgäu and Bayerisch-Schwaben (Bavarian Swabia) are at the southwestern corner of Bavaria and like Franconia only became part of Bavaria following the Napoleonic era. The southern half of the Romantic Road passes through the area. Major sights include **Augsburg** and the fairy-tale castle **Schloss Neuschwanstein**. **Ottobeuren** is one of the largest and artistically most accomplished Baroque monasteries in Germany.

History

Like most German states, Bavaria has a colorful and complex history, which in no manner is simplified by being the oldest German political entity still in existence. Bavaria has been a political entity from around 555 and that is the only simple fact of Bavarian history. The rulers, the people, and the borders frequently changed as dynasties split or reunited and wars added or lost land.

Bavaria received its present borders only after the World War II, although it has been mostly in its present form since the end of the Napoleonic era. Although Bavaria at times incorporated much of Austria and even Northern Italy, before the early 19th century, it mostly consisted of the areas now known as Upper and East Bavaria.

It is, of course, impossible to isolate the history of Bavaria from that of Germany in general. But Bavaria, despite its present size, generally failed throughout history to take a leading role in German politics.

German history is complex and somewhat confusing. Use this chart to keep important events in context.

- **100 BC-AD 400**: Romans occupy parts of Germany, mostly west of the Rhine and south of the Danube.
- **555-778**: Agilolfinger dynasty rules Bavaria.
- **800**: Charlemagne is crowned Roman Emperor.
- **9th to 12th centuries**: Romanesque (*Romanik*) architecture.
- **962**: Otto II is crowned German Roman Emperor. (The entity later known as the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation lasted until 1806.)
- **1180**: Otto von Wittelsbach becomes duke of Bavaria. The Wittelsbachs rule Bavaria until 1918.
- **1255**: Bavaria is split into two duchies. Several further divisions followed.
- **1329**: Wittelsbach family splits into Bavarian and Palatinate lines.
- **13th to 16th centuries**: Gothic (*Gotik*) architecture. The oldest surviving half-timbered (*Fachwerk*) houses are from this period, although many of these "medieval" buildings actually date from the 16th to 18th centuries and even later.)
- **1506**: Bavarian duchies reunite and the rule of primogeniture is decreed.
- **1516**: Beer Purity Law is decreed.
- **1518**: Martin Luther's 95 Theses initiates the Lutheran Reformation.
- **1524-26**: The Peasants' War rages in much of Franken and Swabia, though not in Bavaria.
- **1552-55**: Second Margrave War in much of Franken concludes with the defeat of the Margrave of Kulmbach.
- **1555**: Peace of Augsburg allows rulers to select the state's religion.
- **1520-1620**: Renaissance architecture.
- **1618-48**: Thirty Years' War devastates and depopulates large areas of Germany. The Peace of Westphalia (1648) left Germany with around 350 independent political entities.
- **17th and 18th centuries**: Baroque (*Barok*) and Rococo (*Rokoko*) architecture developed – the styles most associated with Bavaria.
- **1701-14**: Bavaria is on the losing side and occupied during much of the War of Spanish Succession.
- **1756-63**: Seven Years' War confirms the rise of Prussia as the fifth European power.
- **1777**: Bavarian line of the Wittelsbachs dies out. The Palatinate line continues Wittelsbach rule of Bavaria up to 1918.

- **1792-1815**: Napoleon redraws the European and German political map. The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation comes to a formal end in 1806. Germany is reduced to 25 political entities. Bavaria doubles in size by adding Franken, Allgäu, and numerous free imperial cities and other entities.
- **1806**: Bavaria becomes a kingdom.
- **19th century**: Romanticism (*Romantik*) and Historicist architecture. After 1871, "Foundation time" (*Gründerzeit/ Wilhelmine*) architecture, followed by Art Nouveau (*Jugendstil*).
- **1866**: Prussian-Austrian war confirms Prussia as the preeminent power in Germany.
- **1870-71**: Franco-Prussian war ends with the foundation of the (Second) German Empire, dominated by Prussia. Bavaria joins as a kingdom with limited sovereignty in the empire.
- **1886**: Bavaria's Fairy Tale King Ludwig II is declared insane and dies.
- **1886-1913**: Regency Period in Bavaria.
- **1914-18**: First World War ends with Germany defeated and the end of the monarchy.
- **1919-1933**: The ill-fated Weimar Republic fails to cope with economic and political upheaval. Munich sees several revolutions and attempted coups d'état.
- **1933-1945**: The Nazi era ends in the carnage of the Second World War. Germany is totally defeated, occupied, partitioned, and reduced in size.
- **1949-1989**: Germany divided into a democratic West Germany and a Communist East Germany. Bavaria is geographically the largest state in West Germany.
- **1989**: A peaceful revolution ends the East German regime.
- **1990**: Germany re-unites and Berlin resumes its role as capital.

The Bavarians

Bavarians generally developed out of three Germanic tribes: the Bajuwaren (also known as the Bavarii), the Swabians (Alemanni), and the Franks. However, modern-day Bavarians are an intermix of these and other peoples.

The **Bajuwaren** probably originated in Bohemia and moved into the Bavarian area after the Romans had left. The **Franks**, who lived mostly in Franconia, the northern half of modern-day Bavaria, were related to the Franks who at the end of the Roman era settled along the Rhine. Charlemagne was their most famous ruler. The **Swabians** developed out of the Germanic Alemanni tribe and lived in the far west of modern-day Bavaria in the regions of Allgäu and Bavarian-Swabia.

Early History

Charlemagne

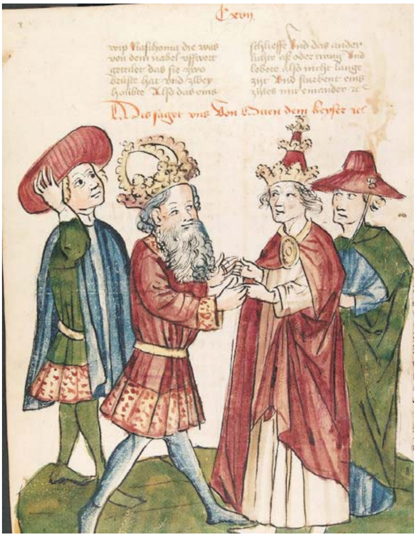
The first written reference to humans in Bavaria is of the **Celts**, who settled in the region around 500 BC. The **Romans** arrived shortly before the Christian era and ruled the area south of the Danube as the province Raetia.

By the fifth century, the Romans had left and the **Bajuwaren** settled in Upper and East Bavaria. Around 555, **Garibald I**, of the powerful **Agilolfinger family**, became duke of Bavaria, then an easternmost province of the Frankish Empire. In 788, **Charlemagne** banished the rebellious **Duke Tasillo III**, the last Agilolfinger, to a monastery and the Franks took direct control of Bavaria.

Much of Bavaria converted to **Christianity** in the seventh and early eighth century. St. Boniface reorganized the church in the region and founded the bishoprics of Regensburg, Passau, Freising, and Salzburg – the institutions that would remain the mainstay of the church in Bavaria for centuries.

Duchy of Bavaria

In 1180, Bavaria was awarded to **Otto von Wittelsbach** of the Palatinate. The Wittelsbach dynasty would rule Bavaria up to 1918. However, consistency should not be confused with stability. The Wittelsbachs followed the Germanic habit of dividing properties equally among all sons. For the next three centuries or so, the Wittelsbachs were so preoccupied with dividing lands and fighting among themselves that, despite its size and central location, Bavaria was removed from the center of German power politics.



Otto I meeting Pope Johannes XII

The first split was in 1255 and many more, along with numerous wars, followed, until Bavaria was reunited, more or less, in 1506. In 1329, the Wittelsbach dynasty itself divided into the **Bavarian branch**, which would rule Bavaria up to 1777, and the **Palatinate branch**, which would rule the Palatinate and again Bavaria from 1777 to 1918.

Meanwhile, in Bavaria itself the divisions continued, with separate duchies at times ruled from Munich, Landshut, Straubing, and Ingolstadt. Numerous wars (often between brothers), papal and imperial bans, first-class treacheries, straightforward kidnappings and murders later, in 1506, **Duke Albert IV the Wise** succeeded in reuniting most of Bavaria. He decreed the rule of primogeniture, which did not prevent his younger son from forcing his older brother to cede a small part of Bavaria for his rule. But Bavaria henceforth would not be divided between princes again.

Dates after a ruler's name refer to years reigned, while those after other names are the years they lived.

Electoral Bavaria (1623-1805)

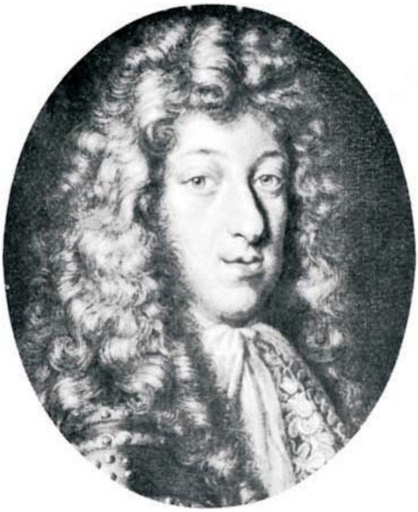
The reunited duchy used the 16th century to consolidate power and to fend off the Lutheran Reformation threat. **Duke Maximilian I** (1597-1651) was a particularly able ruler, which was fortunate for Bavaria as large parts of the duchy was decimated by the ravages of the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648).

THE THIRTY YEARS' WAR

The Thirty Years' War (1618-48) was the most devastating war in German history. It started off between the Protestant Elector of the Palatinate and the Catholic Habsburg Emperor over the right of accession to the Bohemian throne, but over three decades the war came to involve most of Europe.

Most of the battles were on German soil. A scorched earth policy was followed by both sides, which saw up to a third of the German population die – mostly from hunger following harvest destruction. Even the most conservative estimates of population lost exceed 15% and, in some regions, it was well over 50%. Following four years of negotiations, the Peace of Westphalia (1648) ended the war and rang in the era of nation states and national armies in Europe. However, Germany remained divided into some 350 politically independent entities.

Much of the Duchy of Bavaria recovered quickly after the Thirty Years' War. However, numerous free imperial cities, such as Rothenburg and Nürnberg, as well as Protestant areas, such as Brandenburg-Ansbach, were left impoverished and either took longer to recover or never really played a prominent role again.



Elector Maximilian II Emanuel

On the political and diplomatic front, the 18th century was disastrous for Bavaria. It started off badly with **Elector Maximilian II Emanuel** (1679-1726) making common cause with France during the War of Spanish Succession (1701-14) and suffering a devastating defeat at the Battle of Blenheim/Höchstadt (1704) against the Austrians and English. Bavaria was partitioned between the Palatinate and Austria and occupied until 1714.

Elector Karl Albrecht (1726-1745) learned nothing from his father's disastrous war with Austria. During the War of Austrian Succession (1740-1748), Bavaria allied itself again with France and invaded Austria. Karl Albrecht succeeded in having himself crowned king of Bohemia and even Holy Roman Emperor in 1742. However, Austria again occupied Munich. The new **Elector Maximilian III Joseph** (1745-1777) quickly made peace with his southern neighbor. He was an enlightened ruler but died childless, ending the Bavarian line of the Wittelsbach dynasty.

For Bavaria, the miserable century continued. **Duke Karl Theodor** (1777-1799), elector of the Palatinate, cared little and did nothing for Bavaria. In an attempt to get his illegitimate children acknowledged as princes of the realm, he secretly tried to exchange Bavaria for the Austrian Low Lands (modern-day Belgium).

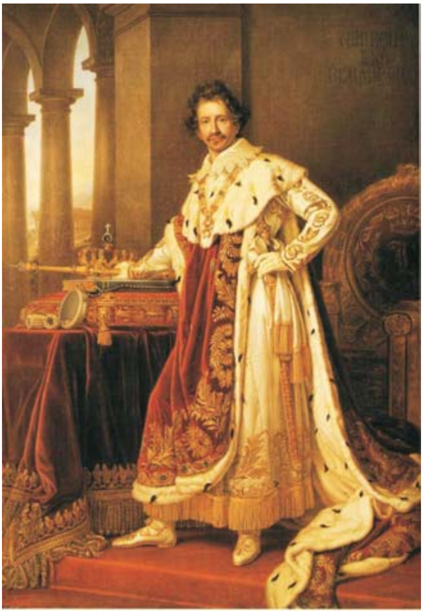
Karl Theodor further disgraced himself by not preparing for or resisting the French invasion of the Palatinate in 1792 and of Bavaria itself in 1795. Karl Theodor fled to Saxony and died early in 1799. His successor **Elector Maximilian IV Joseph** (1799-1805, titled **King Maximilian I** from 1806-1825) had little choice but to ally with Austria, which was already occupying his duchy, and he shared in Austria's defeat by Napoleon at the Battle of Hohenlinden (1801).

However, after a miserable 18th century, Bavaria's fortunes were about to change. Egged on by his very able Minister **Maximilian Count of Montgelas**, Maximilian allied himself with Napoleon. The payoff was enormous: in exchange for some Bavarian counties near the Rhine, Bavaria received, among others, the bishoprics of Würzburg, Bamberg, Augsburg, Freising, and Passau, the territories of 12 abbeys, the County Brandenburg-Ansbach, and several former free imperial cities. In 1805, Napoleon consented to Bavaria becoming a kingdom.

Shortly before Napoleon's defeat at the Battle of the Nations (Leipzig, October 1813), King Maximilian switched sides in exchange for guarantees to keep his kingdom intact. Following the peace negotiations at the **Congress of Vienna**, Bavaria kept most of its gains – in effect all of Franken, Bavarian-Swabia, the Allgäu, numerous abbeys, and free imperial cities, including Nürnberg and Regensburg. During the Napoleonic era, Bavaria thus doubled in size while the population tripled.

After 1815, the hundreds of former independent German entities were reduced to just 25. Much of the next half-century would consist of a power play between Prussia and Austria for supremacy in the German-speaking world. Bavaria failed to influence events much.

The Kingdom of Bavaria (1806-1918)



Ludwig I

The Bavarian kings were generally able, benevolent, and popular rulers. They were well educated and fond of the arts.

Ludwig I (1825-48) erected several monuments, including Walhalla near Regensburg, the Freedom Hall in Kelheim, as well as the Alte and Neue Pinakotheken and Glyphotek in Munich. He had a famously roving eye and had the Schönheitengalerie (Gallery of Beauties) installed in the Nymphenburg Palace in Munich. He had several affairs but allowing his mistress Lola Montez to involve herself in politics cost him his throne when he had to abdicate following the 1848 Revolution.

King Maximilian II (1848-64) spent most of his reign trying to (unsuccessfully) stave off the increasing influence and power of Prussia in Germany. He was in favor of a union of central German states to balance the power of Prussia in the north and Austria in the south but nothing came of this idea. He is also remembered for restoring Schloss Hohenschwangau in a Historicist style and thereby inspired the fairy tale castles of his son.

Mad **King Ludwig II** (1864-86 – the Germans generally prefer *Märchenkönig* or Fairy Tale King, ascended to the throne at age 18. He loved the arts and sponsored several of Wagner's operas as well as the construction of the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth. He is best remembered for his fairy-tale castles Neuschwanstein, which inspired Disney, Linderhof, and Herrenchiemsee, which bankrupted him and cost him his throne.

During his reign, Bavaria sided with Austria in the Seven Weeks' War (1866) but, due to the generosity of Bismarck's clever diplomacy, paid little directly for being on the losing side. Bavaria shocked France by joining the Prussian side in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-71). Ludwig II, encouraged by Bismarck (and several concessions), suggested that **Prussian King Wilhelm** become German Emperor. On January 18, 1871, the German Empire was proclaimed – for the first time ever, Germany was a nation state.

Luitpold

As part of the German Empire, Ludwig II was less important than before and he increasingly withdrew from society to concentrate on his castles and other fantasies. In 1886, the Bavarian government, worried by his actions, debts, and the absence of a son (or indeed wife), had him declared insane. (Debate still rages over whether he was insane, just eccentric, or abusing substances.) Ludwig II died four days after being dethroned – whether it was suicide, murder, or natural causes has never been clarified. His brother **Otto** (1886-1916) officially became king but, as he was unquestionably insane, his uncle took over the reign as **Luitpold, Prince Regent of Bavaria** (1886-1912).

Luitpold's rule, known as the Prinzregentenzeit (Regency Period), was a golden age for Bavaria and especially Munich. He allowed a liberal government and Munich became an important European cultural center.

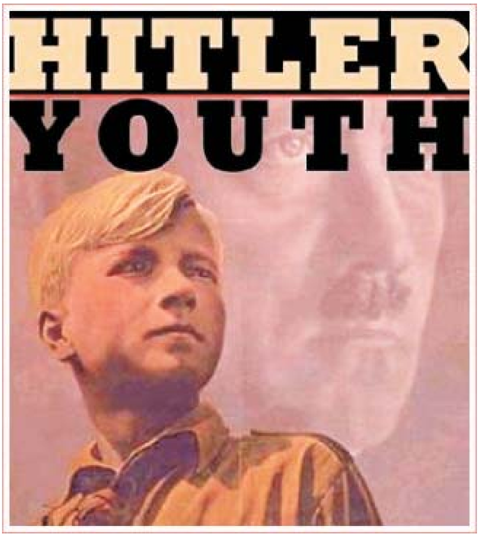
Luitpold was succeeded by his son **Ludwig III** (1913-18), who declared the regency period over and ascended the throne as king of Bavaria, leaving Bavaria officially with two kings until the death of Otto in

1916. The reign of the Wittelsbachs came to an unceremonious end in 1918.

The 20th Century

In the chaos that followed throughout most of Germany during the final days of the First World War, socialist **Kurt Eisner** took the political lead in Munich and on November 8, 1918 declared Bavaria a Free State and the monarchy ended. Extremist parties held sway in Bavaria, with the socialists and Communists particularly strong in Munich. After Eisner was assassinated in 1919, left-wing parties, fearing a right-wing Putsch, declared the *Räterepublik* (Soviet-style republic) in Munich; parliament fled to Bamberg. The *Freikorps* (right-wing nationalists) were called in to suppress the Soviets, which they did with aplomb and in the bloodbath that followed at least 2,200 Communists were killed in Munich.

In the anti-Communist atmosphere that followed, right-wing parties flourished. In 1923, **Adolf Hitler**, the leader of a minor right-wing party, attempted the Bierhalle Putsch (Beer Hall Coup d'État), in what he had hoped would be the beginning of a fascist march to ultimately take power in all of Germany. The participants received lenient sentences and Hitler himself was a free man in just over a year.



Despite the chaos, Germany remained a union and became a republic with an ultraliberal constitution. It had a difficult start but by the mid-1920s it seemed as if Germany was well on its way to becoming a liberal democracy. However, the worldwide recession did it in. Growing unemployment was the ideal breeding ground for extremists but the rightist-nationalist National Socialist German Workers' Party (NSDAP or **Nazi Party**) had the most success. Not only were the Nazis masters of propaganda, they were also more than willing to use violent and illegal methods to silence opposition. In 1933, Hitler formally took power in Germany. Learning from the failed 1923 coup, the Nazis this time made sure they followed all legal procedures to make Hitler dictator. (Of course, illegal methods were used to keep the opposition out of parliament.)

Many of the Nazi leaders hailed from Bavaria and showered the state with privileges. Munich became the Capital of the Movement, Landsberg the Nazi City of Youth, while Nürnberg hosted the annual party rallies. Hitler had moved to Berchtesgaden following his release from prison in 1924 and, after the Nazis came to power in 1933, all the top leaders built villas for themselves there. Berchtesgaden was like a second capital. In 1933, Dachau, the first of the Nazis' notorious concentration camps was built outside Munich.

During the **Second World War**, numerous Bavarian cities were bombed in air raids, with Munich, Augsburg, Ingolstadt, Nürnberg, and Würzburg particularly hard-hit. In contrast, Regensburg and Passau escaped the war with very limited damage.

Following the war, Bavaria was mostly occupied by American troops. The occupation lasted until 1955, although the US maintained several bases in Bavaria.

In 1949, Bavaria became a free state in the Federal Republic of Germany (or West Germany up to 1990). Post-war Bavarian politics have been dominated by the center-right **Christian Socialist Union** (CSU), which has governed post-war Bavaria for all but three years during the 1950s.

Culture

Germany has a long tradition of producing high culture, with many famous composers and writers. The huge number of small states in centuries past ensured that there were ample patrons and courts that needed musicians and other performers. Classical music and theater remain very popular in modern-day Germany, especially among the middle classes. Ticket prices are often astonishingly low.

During summer, most regions arrange a summer concert season with many open-air events. Castles, monasteries, palaces, and churches are popular venues in addition to dedicated concert halls. Regional tourist offices have details on events and often make reservations too.

Although German art, music, and literature go back to the earliest beginnings of the empire, the post-Reformation works are of most interest to most foreign travelers. The following is a brief summary of the most important artists in the German-speaking world, with special emphasis on Bavarians.

Artists

15th Century

Veit Stoß, sculptor and painter (*Angel's Greeting* in the Lorenzkirche, Nürnberg, and *Reredos of the Nativity* in Bamberg Cathedral).

Tilman Riemenschneider, sculptor and woodcarver (Tomb of Heinrich II in Bamberg Cathedral and *Adam and Eve* in Mainfränkische Museum in Würzburg).

16th Century

Albrecht Dürer, the painter who brought the Renaissance to Germany, is one of the all time greats in German art. Major works are in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich, Gemäldegalerie in Berlin, and *Charlemagne* in the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nürnberg.

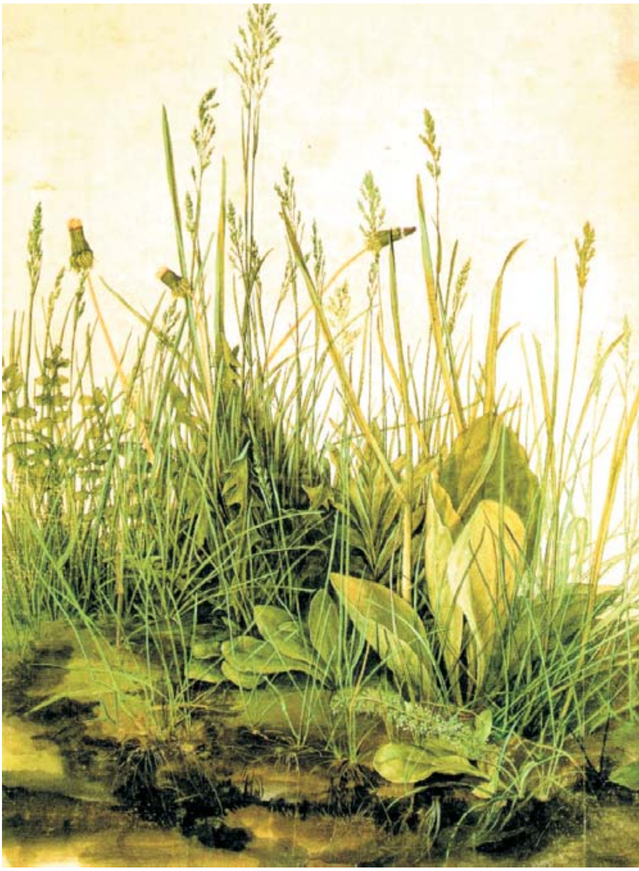
Lucas Cranach the Elder, the master painter of the Reformation, left a huge collection of works spread through Germany. The most famous work is probably the painting of Martin Luther now in the Germanishes Nationalmuseum in Nürnberg.

17th Century

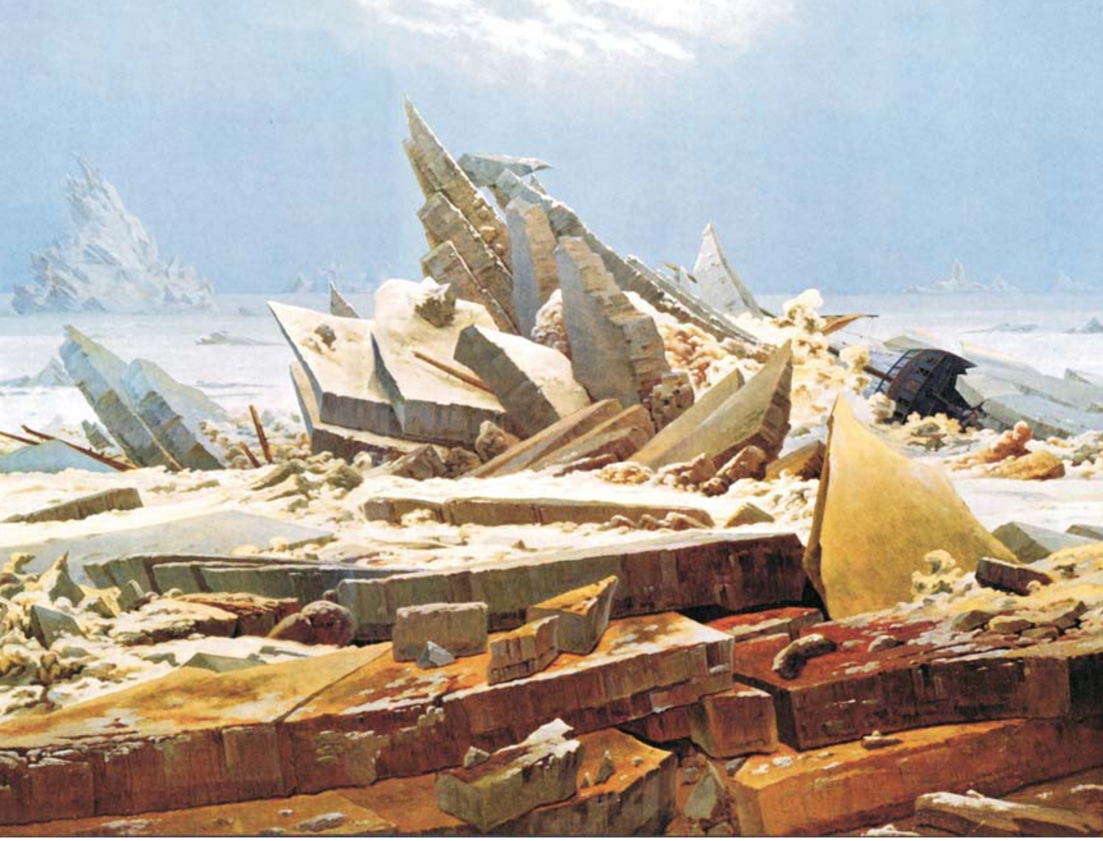
Elias Holl, an important Renaissance architect (Rathaus, Augsburg).

18th Century

Johann Baptist Zimmermann (Wieskirche, Schloss Nymphenburg) and the **Asam brothers** (Asamkirche, Munich) were Rococo virtuosos who left their marks as architects and artists on many Bavarian churches. The **Dientzenhofer family** erected several Baroque churches in Würzburg and Bamberg. **Balthasar Neumann** (Würzburg Residence and Fourteen Saints' Church) created several Baroque masterpieces while in the service of the bishops of Bamberg and Würzburg.



Turf (Albrecht Dürer)



The Sea of Ice (Caspar David Friedrich)

19th Century

Caspar David Friedrich – German Romantic painter, best known for fanciful landscapes.

Max Liebermann and **Lovis Corinth** were leading members of the Munich Secessionist movement. Their efforts were supported by the magazine *Jugend* (Youth), which gave the new Art Nouveau style its German name, *Jugendstil*.

20th Century

The Expressionists saw several movements develop, including *Die Brücke* (The Bridge) in Dresden and the Munich-based *Der blaue Reiter* (Blue Rider), founded by **Wassily Kandinsky** and **Franz Marc**, later joined by **Paul Klee** and others. The Lenbachhaus, Munich has many Blue Rider works.

Neue Sachlicheit (New Objectivity) included some Bauhaus and Dada artists, among others. One of the most famous proponents was **Otto Dix** (*War* in Albertinum, Dresden).

The post-Second World War art scene moved decisively northwards to cities such as Düsseldorf and Hamburg. However, the Pinakothek der Moderne in Munich is one of the best places in Germany to see modern art. Fine samples of Concrete Art can be seen in Ingolstadt and Würzburg.

Architecture

Architectural developments in Bavaria follow the larger German model with styles generally originating elsewhere. The styles most associated with Bavaria are the Baroque and more playful Rococo. These styles of the mid-17th to late 18th century coincided with a period of unprecedented building activity in Bavaria, which produced some of the most popular tourist attractions in the country.

Early Architecture

Although a few **Celtic** structures have survived to the present, these are more archeological than architectural in nature. Even from the **Roman** period, very little remains. The largest is in Regensburg, while some Roman structures were rebuilt in, for example, Kempten (Allgäu).

A few minor **Carolingian** buildings survived, including the Torhalle on Fraueninsel (Herrenchiemsee) and the core of the Gnadenkappelle in Altötting.

Romanesque & Gothic

Bavaria has several **Romanesque** churches, although almost all were converted into later styles. The purest example is probably the **Basilica in Altenburg** (near Schongau on the Romantic Road).

The **Gothic** is generally overshadowed by the Baroque in Bavaria but the region still has some

Basilica in Altenburg

fine samples. The largest and most important is the **Dom in Regensburg**. In Nürnberg, the **St Lorenz**, **Frauen**, and **St Sebaldkirchen** are Gothic. The **Frauenkirche in Munich** is another pure example and was the last major Gothic work in Bavaria. Numerous town halls and town gates are Gothic.

Renaissance

The Renaissance came late to Germany and, due to the religious and political upheavals of the 16th century, the style is less common than in other parts of Europe. However, Bavaria has some fine examples, including the large **Schloss Johannisburg in Aschaffenburg**, the **Rathaus** and **Fuggerkapelle** in Augsburg, the lovely **Michaelskirche in Munich**, **Plassenburg in Kulmbach**, the **Stadtresidenz in Lanshut**, and **Schloss Amerang (Chiemgau)**.

Michaelskirche in Munich

Baroque & Rococo

No architectural style is more associated with Bavaria than the Baroque. Following the devastation of the religious strife following the Lutheran Reformation and the scorched-earth policies of the Thirty Years' War, Bavaria rebuilt and did so mostly in the Baroque. Monasteries, churches, and palaces were erected in or converted to this exuberant style.

The five **Dientzenhofer brothers** (plus sons) were mostly active in Franken. **Johann Leonhard** (1660-1707) designed the Residenz and Kloster Michaelsberg in Bamberg, Kloster Ebrach, and Kloster Banz (Bad Staffelstein), while **Johann** (1663-1726) designed Schloss Weissenstein, the Dom in Fulda, and several palaces in Bamberg.

However, arguably the most talented Baroque architect in Franken was **Balthasar Neumann** (1687-1753). His best works include the

Würzburg Residenz and the Vierzehnheiligen church (Bad Staffelstein).

Southern Bavaria is rich in Baroque monasteries, churches, and palaces. **Dominikus Zimmermann** (1685-1766) was the most accomplished architect of his time. His masterworks include the Wieskirche, as well as the Rathaus and Johanneskirche in Landsberg. He frequently cooperated with his equally talented brother **Johan Baptist** (1680-1758), whose stuccowork adorns the interiors of numerous Bavarian churches and palaces, including the Wieskirche, Kloster Ettal, Schloss Nymphenburg, Kloster Buxheim, and the Munich Residenz.

The **Asam family** also left their mark on numerous Rococo churches and monasteries in Bavaria. **Georg Asam** (1649-1711) was a talented fresco painter (the basilicas in Tegernsee and Benediktbeuren) but his sons are more famous. **Cosmas Damian** (1686-1739) was a fresco painter and architect, while **Eqid Quirin** (1692-1750) was a stucco artist and sculptor. Their talents complemented each other in masterworks that included **Kloster Weltenburg**, the **Asamkirche in Munich**, **Maria de Victoria in Ingolstadt**, and **Weingarten**.

Johann Michael Fischer (1692-1766) designed the monastery churches in Dießen, Rott am Inn, and Ottobeuren. His contemporary, **François de Cuvilliés** (1695-1768), went from court jester to star architect. He concentrated on secular works, including **Amalienburg at Schloss Nymphenburg** and the **Cuvilliés Theater** in the **Munich Residenz**.

In the Cuvilliés Theater (Andreas Praefcke)

19th Century

The late 18th century, but especially the 19th century, saw a revival of older styles. First off was neo-Classicism, with **Leo von Klenze** (1784-1865) a leading architect. He designed numerous buildings in Munich (Königsplatz, Alte Pinakothek, Odeonsplatz), fortifications in Ingolstadt and, famously, Walhalla outside Regensburg.

The mid-19th century saw a revival and combination of many styles, often described as **Historicism**. Famous works from this period include the fantasy castles of King Ludwig, including Neuschwanstein (neo-Romanesque) and Linderhof (neo-Baroque). Munich's neo-Gothic Rathaus and Memmingens's neo-Rococo Steuerhaus are other fine samples. The original colorful interiors of numerous Gothic churches and castles were also stripped bare during this period in an erroneous belief that this was what medieval interiors looked like.

The century closed with what is generally known as the *Gründerzeit* (foundation time) or *Wilhelmine* style. It roughly corresponds with the English late Victorian period and is named after the foundation of the German Empire (1871) or the two Wilhelm Kaisers. The style is mostly seen in large urban villas, with some fine samples in Bad Reichenhall.

20th Century

The 20th century opened with the lovely **Art Nouveau**, in German known as *Jugendstil*. The best-known example in Bavaria is the **Müllersches Volksbad** in Munich. Fine *Jugenstil* villas can be seen in the Munich suburb of Schwabing, as well as in Straubing (Ostbayern).

Müllersches Volksbad

The Nazis loved things stark, pompous, and monumental. Munich converted their *Acropolis Germaniae* back to the original classical Königplatz, but the Haus der Kunst is clearly to Third Reich taste. The best-known and largest Third Reich constructions are the Nazi Party Rallying Ground in Nürnberg, designed by **Albert Speer**. He also did the train station in Berchtesgaden, a major Nazi leaders' holiday retreat.

Following the damage of the Second World War, Bavarian cities mostly chose to restore historical buildings to their pre-war appearance. However, lesser buildings were often replaced by square ones that were easy and cheap to construct. "Postwar Hideous" is an apt description of this style. Bavarians' conservative tastes meant that modernism is less popular here than elsewhere in Germany. However, the futuristic 1970s designs of the Olympic Stadium, BMW's head offices, and Hypovereinsbank in Munich were clear exceptions. Further postmodern designs in the Bavarian capital include the Fünf Höfe shopping complex and the Allianz Stadium, home of Germany's best-known soccer team, Bayern München.

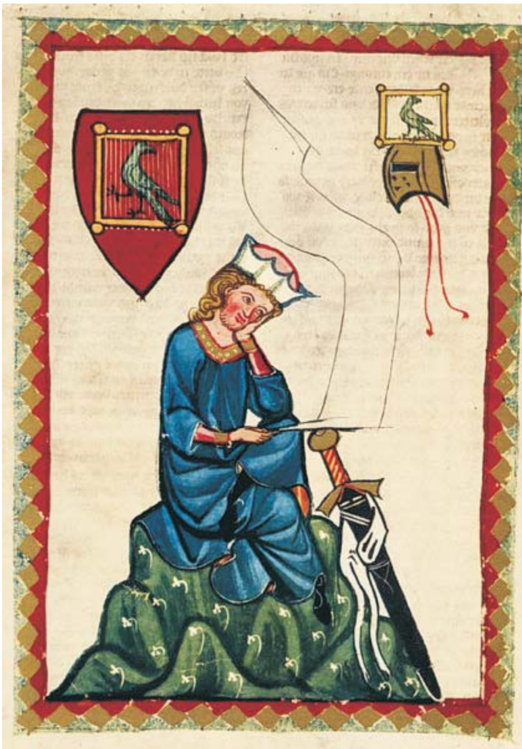
Music

Germany is famous for its classical music and composers. Classical music is popular throughout Bavaria, with many smaller cities such as Bamberg, Regensburg, and Bad Reichenhall having their own symphony orchestras, while Munich's opera house and classical music scene are world-famous. It therefore comes as a bit of a surprise that so few of the great German composers are Bavarian natives. Few would be able to name the three most important Bavarian composers (Richard Strauss, Carl Orff, and Gluck) and even fewer could name a fourth (Johann Pachelbel, Werner Egk, or Max Reger?). This section therefore includes musicians from all parts of the German-speaking world.

Middle Ages

From the 12th century onwards, the Minnesänger (troubadours) were famous entertainers and included masters such as **Walther von der Vogelweide** and **Wolfram von Eschenbach**. In the 15th century, the Meistersinger (Mastersingers) formed a guild – the most famous proponent was **Hans Sachs** from Nürnberg – the inspiration for Wagner's *Meistersinger von Nürnberg* opera.

The Lutheran Reformation boosted German music because new religious music sung in German, rather than Latin, was required.



Walther von der Vogelweide

Baroque

Johann Sebastian Bach (1685-1750) is considered by many the greatest composer of all time. He left an incredibly large collection of works, mostly but not exclusively religious. His range was restricted by his rather conservative employers who wanted no opera or drama in the church service.

The Bavarian-born **Christoph Willibald von Gluck** (1714-87) rewrote the style of operas by placing more emphasis on a decent story. Although not particularly popular during his lifetime, he greatly influenced later musicians, including Mozart and Berlioz.

Other famous composers from the period include **Georg Friedrich Händel**, who spent most of his working life in London, and **Georg Philipp Telemann**.

Wiener Klassik

Under **Joseph Haydn** and **Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart**, working mostly in Vienna, classical music reached a high point. Mozart left more than 600 works, including 41 symphonies. (Mozart praised Munich's musicians and was welcomed in the Bavarian court but financial difficulties meant that Elector Maximilian III could not afford to offer him a position.) They were followed by **Ludwig von Beethoven**, who was born in Bonn but spent most of his productive life in Vienna. He was the first major composer to finance himself through concerts rather than being employed by a court or writing on commission. His nine symphonies and other works set the stage for the Romantics.

Romantics

The Romantics of the 19th century wrote a wide range of music ranging from *Lieder* (songs) to operas, symphonies to chamber music and piano sonatas. Famous composers from this era include **Franz Schubert**, **Carl Maria von Weber**, **Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy**, **Robert Schumann**, **Franz Liszt**, and **Johannes Brahms**.

Probably the most famous composer was **Richard Wagner**. He was a close friend of Bavarian King Ludwig II, who financed and encouraged his endeavors, including the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth. His epic operas included the *Meistersinger von Nürnberg*, *Parsifal*, and the *Ring* (*Rheingold, Walküre, Siegfried*, and *Götterdämmerung).* His popularity with the Nazis probably limited his international

Richard Wagner

appeal more than the strong German themes of his works.

20th-Century Classical

The Bavarians **Richard Strauss** (*Also sprach Zarathustra*) and **Carl Orff** (*Carmina Burana*) wrote some innovative pieces early in the century, before the Second World War interfered. **Kurt Weill** cooperated with Bertold Brecht on *The Threepenny Opera*. **Werner Egk** shot to fame just before the Second World War but is best remembered for his productions in Munich in the two decades following the war.

Literature

Early Literature

The ninth-century ***Hildebrandlied*** is generally considered the first German literary work, although the ***Wessobrunner Gebet*** is an older but clearly religious work. It was followed in the 12th and 13th centuries by the works of the Minnesänger (troubadours). The epic ***Nibelungenlied*** was possibly commissioned for the court of Passau during the 13th century.

The first work in modern German was **Martin Luther's** translation of the Bible. It standardized the language and most works written since then can be read by anyone with a decent knowledge of German.

The first major German novel was **Grimmelshausen's** *Simplicissimus*, a picaresque novel inspired by the misery that the Thirty Years' War had caused.

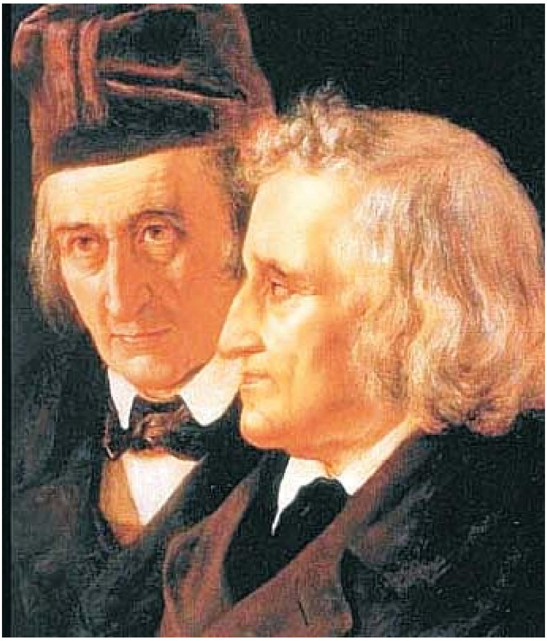
The Age of Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*) saw works by philosophers such as **Gottfried Leibnitz** and **Emanuel Kant**. **Gotthold Lessing** is best known for his tragedies, following the example of Shakespeare and the ancient Greeks. **Christoph Wieland's** novels are often also grouped into this era

Sturm und Drang & Classicism

The short *Sturm und Drang* (Storm and Stress) period lasted only from 1767 to 1785. It broke away from the rationalism of the Enlightenment in favor of freedom, nature, and emotions. The best-known works from this period are **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's** novella *Die Leiden des jungen Werthers* and **Friedrich Schiller's** play *Die Räuber.*

Both writers found inspiration from the Greek and Roman ideals and wrote some of the best works ever produced in German. At the top of the list is Goethe's *Faust*, a two-part drama in verse. Schiller's plays such as *Wilhelm Tell*, *Maria Stuart*, and *Don Carlos* are still popular and often performed.

19th Century



The Brothers Grimm

As in much of the rest of Europe, romanticism took hold in German 19th-century literature. One of the most popular poets was **Friedrich Hölderlin**, while **Hegel** is the best-known philosopher from the era. The **Brothers Grimm**, though serious linguistic scholars, are best remembered for the fairy tales that they collected on their travels through Germany.

The Franconian writer **Jean Paul** wrote satirical and comical novels and was even more read during his lifetime than were his contemporaries Goethe and Schiller. Bavaria's premier literary prize is named after him.

ETA Hoffmann spent much of his life in Bamberg where he wrote his satirical and bizarre stories, as well as setting new standards for music criticism. One of his stories inspired Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker.*

Ludwig Ganghofer and **Ludwig Thoma** wrote several works praising the simplicity of rural life in Bavaria. They remain popular in Germany but are generally unknown in the English-speaking world.

20th Century

Some of the best-known modern German writers wrote mostly prior to World War II. Novelists from this era include 1929 Nobel Laureate **Thomas Mann** (*Buddenbrooks, Death in Venice,* and *The Beloved Returns*), 1946 Nobel Laureate **Hermann Hesse** (*Steppenwolf*), and Czech-born **Franz Kafka** (*The Metamorphosis* and *The Trial*). Augsburg-born dramatist **Bertold Brecht** wrote famous pieces in this period, including *The Three Penny Opera* and the *Caucasian Chalk Circle.* Like many other authors, he fled Germany during the Nazi era, but unlike most others established himself after the war in East, rather than West, Berlin.

THOMAS MANN: MUNICH SHONE!

Thomas Mann

One of the best-known German writers is Nobel Laureate Thomas Mann (1875-1955). Although hailing from Lübeck in the far north of Germany, he spent four decades of his life in Munich. The first words of his 1902 work *Gladius Dei* are "München leuchtete!"(Munich shone!) – a reference to the artistic vibrancy of the Bohemian community that lived in the Munich suburb of Schwabing during the period. Although Schwabing's Bohemian shine is nowadays more of a bourgeois glitter, the Munich tourist office still fondly reminds visitors of Mann's words. Mann was a fierce critic of the Nazis and left Germany permanently in 1933. His best-known work, *Buddenbrooks*, was frequently featured in Nazi book-burning ceremonies.

Modern German writers produced a wealth of anti-war literature following World War II. The best-known, post-1945 German writers are 1972 Nobel Laureate **Heinrich Böll** (*The Clown, Billiards at Half Past Nine*) and 1999 Nobel Laureate **Günther Grass** (*The Tin Drum*). The latter only acknowledged in 2006 that he was a member of the SS. However, Munich never recovered its preeminent position as European cultural center. Germany continues to be a nation of readers with among the highest book sales and books read per capita in the world.

Geography

Bavaria has a varied geography. At its southern extreme are the Alps, with Zugspitze near Garmisch-Partenkirchen the highest point in Germany. Several rivers, including the Lech, Isar, Inn, and Salzach, have their sources in the Alps and drain southern Bavaria northwards to the Danube. Rolling hills with Alpine views are common south of the Autobahn A8 from Salzburg to Rosenheim and from there along the B472 to the west. To the north of these roads are several large lakes, including the Chiemsee and Starnberger See.

Popular three-dimensional maps of southern Bavaria are usually south-north rather than the conventional north-south to allow for the Alpine valleys to be shown rather than just the shade of the mountains.

From Munich north toward the Danube, Bavaria is surprisingly flat. The Lech, Isar, and Inn drain southern Germany into the Danube and then eastwards to the Black Sea. The Altmühl and Regen are the main rivers flowing from the north into the Danube: The Danube only became a truly large river after its confluence with the Inn in Passau on the Austrian border. To the north of Passau is the Bavarian Forest, which, together with the Bohemian Forest in the Czech Republic, form the largest continuous forested area in Europe.

The Main River in Würzburg

The Main-Danube Canal has been connecting these two important Bavarian rivers since the late 20th century. The area in between these rivers is the driest in Bavaria and the canal is part of a larger scheme to bring water to the Nürnberg region. Large parts of Franken are hilly or even mountainous, with several forests. The Main River, with its huge s-bends, drains the northern parts of Bavaria westwards to the Rhine and eventually the North Sea.

Climate

Bavaria has a fairly moderate climate, although numerous microclimates are more extreme. In general, winter temperatures hover around freezing while summer sees day temperatures of 20°C/70°F and above, with occasional mid-30sC/80sF days possible. The southern areas have more rain *and* sunshine than the northern areas. The Alps see snowfall from November to April. The *Föhn* is a warm, dry wind that blows down from the Alps and is blamed for everything from headaches to foul tempers. However, it does allow for the best views of the mountains.

Government

The Federal Republic of Germany is a democratic federation, with Bavaria one of its 16 Länder (states). The Bavarian government consists of the popularly elected Landstag (Parliament) and Staatsregierung (state government) headed by a Ministerpräsident (Prime Minister). Parties need at least 5% of the popular vote to be represented in parliament. The conservative Christliche-Soziale Union (CSU/Christian Social Union) has ruled Bavaria since World War II, with just a brief three-year break in the 1950s. On a national level, the CSU is allied with the Christlich Demokratische Union (CDU/Christian Democratic Union), which is not represented in Bavaria. The CSU remains hugely popular in especially rural areas but larger cities such as Munich, Augsburg, and Nürnberg often have left-of-center Social Democratic Party (SPD) or coalition governments.

The Economy

Bavaria has one of the strongest economies in Europe. In Germany, Bavaria's GDP of €404 billion is second only to the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. Its unemployment rate of 7½% is the lowest of all German states.

The main engines of the economy is still manufacturing although high-tech industries and services are increasingly popular. Bavaria is still a major producer of cars (both BMW and Audi have their head offices and manufacturing plants here) and high-technology machines. Around half of all manufactured goods are exported, with the USA a major market.

Bavaria is famous for its agricultural products and its meadows with cows are favorite images for the tourism industry. Bio-products have been popular here long before the organic craze hit the rest of the world. Although a third of Germany's farms are in Bavaria, agriculture contributes only 1% of Bavaria's GDP. Still, it produces more than 400 types of cheese, 40% of all cheese produced in Germany, and more Emmental cheese than Switzerland and France combined.

> In 1920, the Duchy Saxe-Coburg decided by plebiscite to become part of Bavaria rather than Thuringia. A major consideration was that Bavaria as agricultural land would be more likely to provide food in the chaotic years that followed the First World War.

Tourism is also a major industry, contributing over €24 billion annually and employing half a million workers. In 2005, 24 million people visited Bavaria on vacation. Just over 11% of foreign visitors are from the USA, second only to the 12½% who came from the Benelux countries.

Top Attractions

Top Destinations

Munich (Jochen Müller/FVAmuc)

Munich is by far the most popular destination in Bavaria. It is a great city with numerous excellent museums, wonderful palaces, lovely churches, fine shops and restaurants, fun beer gardens, great culture, and the best nightlife in Bavaria.

Nürnberg is the second-largest city, with a long history. It has an historic city core, a huge castle, the largest cultural museum in Germany, and very interesting sites associated with the Nazis and the trial of Nazi leaders following World War II.

Regensburg has the best-preserved historical city core in Germany. It is far too often overlooked by the international traveler.

The beautiful **Alps** are on the southern border of Bavaria. Numerous resorts such as Berchtesgaden, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and Oberstdorf are popular summer and winter destinations.

Fairy Tale, or Mad, King Ludwig's three **fantasy castles** – Neuschwanstein, Linderhof, and Herrenchiemsee – attract around two million visitors per year and are worth seeing.

Bavaria has numerous wonderful **Baroque**

The Bavarian Alps (www.bayern.by)

Bamberg

monasteries – foremost are Ottobeuren, Ettal, and Benediktbeuren. Churches (see below) are often filled with art.

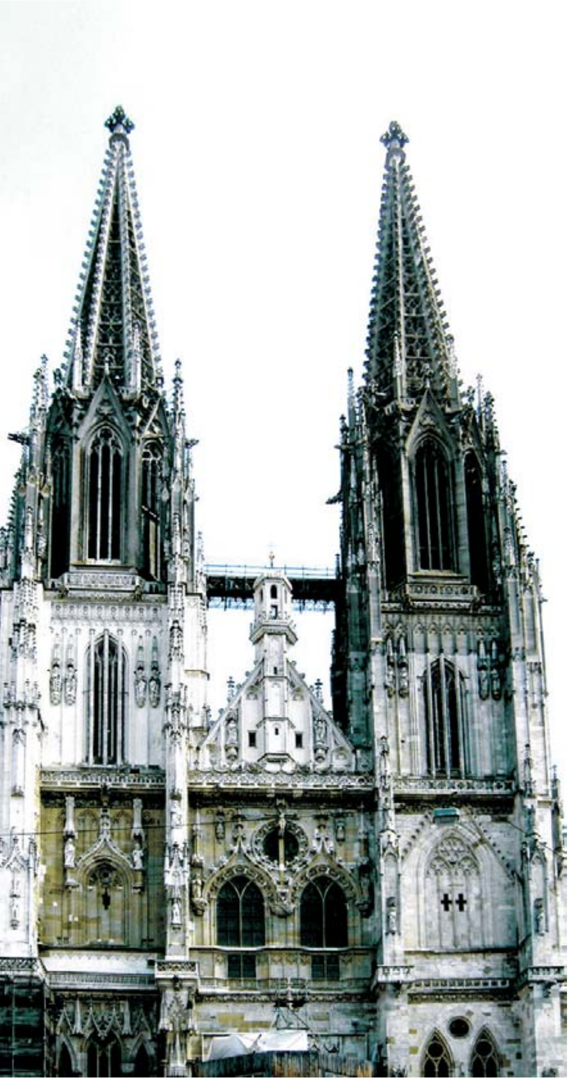
The historical core of **Bamberg** is on the UNESCO World Heritage List with more than 2,000 protected buildings, including the Dom, one of the most magnificent medieval cathedrals in Germany.

The **Romantic Road** runs through Bavaria and passes some of the most romantic places in Germany. Foremost is the walled-in Rothenburg ob der Tauber, a medieval-look town worth a journey.

Passau has a lovely Baroque Old Town on a promontory at the confluence of the Danube and the Inn. It is worth visiting to hear the world's largest pipe organ being played.

Despite severe war damage, **Augsburg** has some excellent historic buildings and fine art displays.

Great Churches



Regensburg Cathedral

The **Wieskirche** near Schongau is Dominikus Zimmermann's masterpiece with inputs by his equally talented brother Johann Baptist – a defining work of the Bavarian Rococo. (Oberbayern).

The **Frauenkirche**, the last major Gothic hall church built in Bavaria – its onion-domed twin towers are the symbol of Munich. (Munich).

The **Regensburg Cathedral** – the largest Gothic building in Bavaria. (Ostbayern).

The **Passau Cathedral** – the largest Baroque church in Bavaria with the world's largest pipe organ. (Ostbayern).

Vierzehnheiligen – Balthasar Neumann's Baroque masterpiece. (Oberfranken).

Ottobeuren – Michael Fischer's Rococo masterpiece. (Unterallgäu).

Asamkirche – the Asam brothers' private church. Only 12 pews but enough decorations to fill a cathedral. (Munich).

The **Basilica St Michael in Altenstadt** near Schongau is the purest example of unaltered Romanesque in Bavaria. (Oberbayern).

The **Michaelskirche** in the largest Renaissance church north of the Alps. Its lovely, mostly white interior already shows some elements of the Baroque and inspired the churches that followed. (Munich).

The **Bamberg Cathedral** is an impressive Gothic church with clear Romanesque elements and fine art. (Oberfranken).

The **Würzburg Cathedral** kept its original Romanesque silhouette but the interior shows elements of all styles since. (Unterfranken).

More Great Baroque Churches

The following Baroque churches are slightly off the beaten track but worth going out of your way for, especially when driving.

The **Asamkirche Maria de Victoria in Ingolstadt** has a wonderful interior by the Asam brothers that include the largest flat-surface ceiling fresco ever painted. (Oberbayern).

St Denis at Kloster Schäftslarn combined the skills of Cuvilliés, Gunetzrhainer, Fischer, Johann Baptist Zimmermann, and Straub. (Oberbayern).

The **Marienmünster in Dießen** combines the skills of Fischer, Cuvilliés, Straub, the Feichtmayers, and Tiepolo. (Oberbayern).

The **Klosterkirche in Rott am Inn** is another work by Fischer, Feichtmair, Rauch, and Günther. (Oberbayern).

St Margareta in Osterhofen near Deggendorf was built by Fischer but the Asam brothers did the marvelous interior. (Ostbayern).

Kloster Weltenburg was the first joint project of the Asam brothers and the church interior is as fantastic as the fine location at the Danube gorge. (Oberbayern).

Kloster Weltenburg

Great Museums

Bavaria has just over 1,150 registered galleries and museums offering an incredible choice. But some are, of course, more impressive than others.

The three **Pinakotheken** in Munich cover art from the Middle Ages to the present – one of the best collections in the world. (Munich).

German National Museum in Nürnberg has the largest collection of German art bar none. (Mittelfranken).

The **German Museum** is one of the world's largest technology museums. (Munich).

The **Dokumentationzentrum** is an excellent display on the Nazi Party Rallies in Nürnberg. (Mittelfranken).

The **Mainfränkisches Museum** in Würzburg has the world's largest collection of works by sculptor Tilman Riemenschneider. (Unterfranken).

The **Glass Museum** in Passau is the largest of its kind in the world. (Ostbayern).

The museums at **Königsplatz** – **Glyptothek** (sculptures from antiquity), **Antikensammlungen** (Greek and Etruscan art), and the **Lenbachhaus** (largest collection of *Blaue Reiter* works). (Munich).

BMW (Munich) and **Audi** (Ingolstadt) have their own museums but for the finest overview of more than a century of German cars visit the **EFA German Automobile Museum** in Amerang in the Chiemgau. (Oberbayern).

Exhibitions on torture implements seem almost obligatory in most castles but for the most thorough treatment of the subject visit the **Medieval Crime Museum** in Rothenburg ob der Tauber. (Mittelfranken).

Great Castles

The **Veste Coburg** is one of the best-preserved medieval fortresses in Germany. It has never been conquered in battle despite numerous attempts. (Oberfranken).

King Ludwig's **Schloss Neuschwanstein**, a 19th-century, Historicist neo-Romanesque folly without any historic or strategic importance but still the one castle people cross oceans to see. It inspired Disney. (Allgäu).

The **Kaiserburg** in Nürnberg was for centuries at the heart of German politics and only used when the Holy Roman Emperor was in town. (Mittelfranken).

The **Burg zu Burghausen** – with a façade over a kilometer long, the longest castle in Europe. (Oberbayern).

Schloss Harburg was the largest Staufen castle north of the Alps and is one of the best-preserved old castles in Bavaria. (Mittelfranken).

The **Plassenburg** in Kulmbach has wonderful Renaissance courtyard frequently used for open-air concerts. (Oberfranken).

Burg Prunn is beautifully located on the cliffs high above the Altmühl Valley. (Oberbayern).

Kaiserburg

Great Palaces

Schloss Nymphenburg is the largest Baroque palace in Bavaria and one of the largest in the world. It has a lovely park too. (Munich).

The **Residenz** served as principal residence of the Wittelsbachs from the late 14th century to 1918. The interior is richly decorated and the Treasury one of the finest in Europe. (Munich).

Residenz in Würzburg (Christian Horvat)

The **Residenz in Würzburg** is the defining work of the very talented Balthasar Neumann and on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list. (Unterfranken).

Although only a quarter of **Schloss Schleißheim** was ever completed, it still impresses with its size, fine interior by Johann Baptist Zimmermann and Cosmas Damian Asam, and the only unaltered large Baroque garden in Bavaria. (Munich).

Schloss Herrenchiemsee (Rufus46)

Schloss Herrenchiemsee, King Ludwig II's most expensive fantasy, was inspired by Versailles and has a hall of mirrors bigger than the original, as well as a lovely location on an island in Bavaria's largest lake.

Schloss Linderhof, the only fantasy palace King Ludwig actually completed, is surprisingly small but the interior is opulently rich. (Oberbayern).

The **Eremitage** near Bayreuth was the pleasure and summer palace of the Brandenburg-Bayreuth dynasty. It is Baroque and Rococo, with fine water features. Also worth seeing is the Neues Schloss in town. (Oberfranken).

Schloss Thurn und Taxis in Regensburg is what you get when a medieval monastery is converted into a suitable Baroque town palace for one of Europe's richest families. (Ostbayern).

Travel Information

Fast Facts

Population

Germany has a population of 82 million and Bavaria, the second-most populous state, has 12½ million. More than 90% of Bavarians are at least nominally Christian with around two-thirds Roman Catholic and a quarter Protestant (mostly Lutheran).

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Orientation 36
- Money 44
- Food & Drink 46
- Electricity 47
- Media 47
- Medical 47
- Restrooms 48
- Shopping 48
- Telephones 49
- Mail 49
- Dates & Time 49
- Costs 50
- Holidays 54
- Adventures 56
- Special Interest 57
- Information Sources 58
- Language 58

Location

Bavaria is in the southeastern corner of Germany, in central Europe. Internationally, Bavaria borders the Czech Republic, Austria, and Switzerland, while it borders the German states of Baden-Württemberg, Hesse, Thuringia, and Saxony.

Major cities

Bavarian cities are generally small with only the capital Munich, Germany's third-largest city, exceeding a million inhabitants.

Munich – 1.3 million

Nürnberg – 493,000

Augsburg – 260,000

Regensburg – 143,000

Würzburg – 131,000

Ingolstadt – 120,000

Time Zone

Central European Time (Greenwich Mean Time plus one hour, or Eastern Standard Time plus six hours).

Orientation

When to Go

Bavaria is best visited between May and October. The school holiday season in July and August is best avoided as prices increase and popular sights are crowded. One week before or after the high season can make a major difference in the number of visitors.

Winters can be bleak and grey and much of the natural beauty of the country will be hidden. Many non-winter sports regions may close down for the winter season. Winter sports areas often close down in November and a few weeks after the season. Advent, however, is a beautiful time of the year with all towns lit up and Christmas markets a major draw.

Customs & Immigration

US and Canadian citizens may enter Germany for up to 90 days with a valid passport.

Germany is part of the Schengen Agreement, allowing travel across European borders without further customs or immigration controls. However, you may at any time inside Germany and other Schengen states be asked to produce proof of identity. (Switzerland, the Czech Republic, and Poland are not members of the Schengen Agreement and have full border controls with Germany.)

Penalties for smuggling illegal drugs are severe. If carrying prescription drugs, it is sensible to bring the prescription with you and do not bring more than actually needed for the duration of the vacation.

Getting Here

By Air

Germany is well served by many airlines, with Frankfurt International Airport the busiest in continental Europe. Most intercontinental flights arrive in Frankfurt, while Munich Airport connects with the largest number of European destinations. Numerous direct and non-stop flights are available from the USA and Canada to Germany, with Lufthansa serving the largest number of destinations. A growing number of European budget airlines are flying to Bavaria.

Munich Airport, www.munich-airport.de, is generally the most convenient for reaching most parts of Bavaria. It currently serves more European destinations than Frankfurt. The airport is northwest of Munich near Freising. It is most easily reached on S-Bahn lines S1 and S8 in around 45 minutes from the Hauptbahnhof (three trains per hour on each line). Bus and taxi services are available to several towns in Bavaria – see the website for details as most operators serve only one town.

Frankfurt Airport, www.airportcity-frankfurt.de, is only 30 minutes drive from the Bavarian border and convenient for destinations in Franken. The airport is directly on the Autobahn A3 that leads past Frankfurt to Würzburg, Nürnberg, Regensburg, and Passau. A major railway station, with additional airline check-in counters, is in the basement of the airport and most long-distance destinations are served directly from here without the need to transfer at Frankfurt Hauptbahnhof.

Nürnberg Airport, www.airport-nuernberg.de, is very conveniently located and just 12 minutes from Nürnberg Hauptbahnhof on the U-Bahn U2, or 15 minutes by taxi. This airport is increasingly popular with budget airlines and a major hub of Air Berlin, www.air-berlin.de.

Salzburg Airport, www.salzburg-airport.com, in Austria is convenient for destinations in the eastern parts of Oberbayern such as Berchtesgaden. Bus 2 goes to Salzburg station in 20 minutes three to six times per hour. Direct bus services are also available to Bad Reichenhall and Berchtesgaden.

By Rail

Bavaria has good railway connection to Austria and Switzerland. The line from Vienna via Linz to Frankfurt stops at Passau, Regensburg, Nürnberg, and Würzburg. Connections to the Czech Republic often involve numerous changeovers – it is worth waiting for the daily direct train from Munich to Prague.

Very good railway connections exist from the rest of Germany to Bavaria, although some connections to former East Germany, including Berlin, are still slower than they should be. (Traveling times to these cities will be reduced dramatically in coming years as new high-speed railways are completed.) Nürnberg is a major rail hub and can be reached on at least hourly trains from Frankfurt (two hours), Hamburg (four to five hours), and Berlin (4½ hours). Munich is a another hour away, usually without needing a transfer.

By Bus

Bus services are available from many European cities and are often the cheapest way to travel to Germany. One of the largest operators is **Deutsche Touring**, Am Römerhof 17, 60486 Frankfurt am Main, ☎ 069-790-350, www.deutsche-touring.de, which operates in cooperation with **Eurolines**, www.eurolines.com. It is usually only possible to take international journeys.

Berlin Linienbus, www.berlinlinienbus.de, has bus services to several Bavarian destinations. Although Berlin is the main departure point, services are also available from some other cities. Routes in Bavaria usually require a reservation.

Getting Around

By Rail

Bavaria has a well-developed railway network with comfortable, high-speed trains often the best way to travel between cities. Although it is no longer possible to set your watch according to a German train's arrival time, trains generally do run on time. Some lines in Bavaria have been privatized recently, and more will follow in the near future, but all still accept the standard Deutsche Bahn tickets and railway passes.

> The most useful website for public transportation information in Germany is that of the Deutsche Bahn (German Railways), www.bahn.de. Searching for connections, take all public transportation options into consideration, including private railways and buses in addition to the services offered by Deutsche Bahn itself. Tickets can often be bought online and printed out at home or from machines at stations. The link to the site's comprehensive English version, including buying tickets online, is somewhat hidden under the "Internat. Guests" link on the German homepage.

German trains can generally be classed in two categories: Fernverkehr (Long Distance) and Nahverkehr (Local). This distinction is important for discount tickets. Long Distance trains are faster, usually more luxurious, and cost more. They have the prefixes ICE (InterCity Express), IC/EC (InterCity/EuroCity – the trains are the same but the latter crosses the German border), and D (schnell/fast trains).

The Nahverkehr (local trains) carry the prefixes (listed in order of speed – the farther down the list the more stops!) IRE (InterRegioExpress), RE (RegionalExpress), RB (Regionalbanh), and S

(S-Bahn). In some cases the U-Bahn, trams, and buses are also included in rail tickets.

Tickets can be bought on board most trains, though never on the S or U-Bahn, but no discounts are available. It is generally best to buy tickets prior to boarding from the Internet, ticket counters, or machines.

Several options are available to save on German railway tickets.

Internet

It is possible to book and print virtually all German rail tickets online at www.bahn.de. The site is also an invaluable tool for planning journeys and calculating budgets. Last-minute deals are often available on the Internet only.

Rail tickets bought online or at ticket machines are usually at least €2 cheaper than those bought at ticket counters!

Children

Children under 15 years old always travel free when accompanied by at least one parent or grandparent. Children older than six must be added for free to the adults ticket at time of booking. Otherwise, children pay half the adult price. A seat can be reserved for the children as well at the normal rate of €3.

Rail Passes

For international travelers, several rail passes are available. Passes can be a good deal, especially if one-way travel is used, for which normal discounts are not available. If the travel involves only Germany, the best deal is the German Rail Pass. It is a flexi pass that allows for unlimited travel over four to 10 days in a given four-week period. The German Rail Pass is available in first or second class, with twin passes for two traveling together and youth passes for those under 25 years old, slightly cheaper.

Sparpreis

Sparpreis tickets are available for round-trip journeys only and must be booked at least three days in advance to obtain a discount of 25%. If a Saturday night stay is included, the discount becomes 50%. Additionally, the exact trains for both journeys must be booked in advance. When reservations are made at the same time, the first passenger pays the normal price (with discount) and up to four additional passengers pay only half of what the first one pays. Cancellation options are limited. The discounts are available for all classes of service but the number of tickets available per train are restricted.

Schönes-Wochenende Ticket

Schönes-Wochenende (Nice Weekend) tickets cost €33 (€35 if bought at ticket counters) per day and are valid either on Saturday or on Sunday from midnight to 3 am the following morning. It allows up to five passengers unlimited travel nationwide on Nahverkehr trains in Second Class.

Länder-Tickets

Länder-Tickets are available in the separate federal states and allow for unlimited travel on Nahverkehr trains in Second Class *inside* the different states. It is available on weekdays from 9 am (weekends from midnight) to 3 am the following day. In Bavaria, the ticket is known as the Bayernticket and costs €27 for up to five travelers or €19 for solo travelers. A new ticket is the Bayernticket Nacht, which is valid from 6 pm to 6 am (7 am on weekends and holidays) the following morning. It costs €19 for up to five travelers. These tickets are also valid on most buses operating inside Bavaria.

BICYCLES ON TRAINS

Bicycles may be taken on most Nahverkehr trains but in cities, restrictions often apply during rush hour. A Fahrrad-Tageskarte (bicycle day ticket) costs €4 per bicycle per day and is valid on all trains in Bavaria. However, on several trains, bicycles can be transported for free. These lines are mostly in Southern and Eastern Bavaria as well as north of the Main. Children's bicycles with wheels smaller than 20 inches are always free.

By Bus

Although trains are generally the most pleasant way to get around Bavaria, buses are often cheaper and a private car more convenient.

Smaller towns in Bavaria can often only be reached by bus. Similarly, it is often easier to use buses to connect between railway lines that go up separate valleys in the Alps.

Public buses in the different regions are operated by separate companies. Making sense out of the published schedules can be very hard without some local knowledge. Fortunately, all bus services are taken into account when searching for connections on the Deutsche Bahn website, www.bahn.de.

By Car

Trains are often the best choice if only cities are visited, but having a car is a pleasurable way of seeing more of the country. It is usually cheapest to reserve a car from abroad. Rental cars picked up from airports and stations carry a surcharge.

Driving in Germany presents little difficulty. The road signs are generally internationalized, while roads are mostly in very good condition and well signposted. All roads are numbered, but many road signs only refer to the next town, without actually showing the route numbers.

SAVING ON GAS

Gas (*Benzin*) in Germany is expensive. At time of writing a liter of diesel cost €1.10 and Super Premium fuel was €1.30. (An American gallon equals 3.8 liters.) Around 80% of the price of fuel is taxes. To get the most gas out of your euro bear the following in mind:

Fuel is generally cheaper in northern Germany than in the south – ditto for Bavaria, although it seems expensive statewide. Fill up if arriving or passing though Austria or the Czech Republic where taxes are significantly lower. Fuel is more expensive on highways. Fuel is more expensive at recognizable international brand outlets – independent gas stations and supermarkets are always cheaper. Gas stations on commuter routes often change prices three times a day and they're more expensive during the rush hours. Fill up on Monday, never on Wednesday – it is a statistical fact that fuel is cheapest on Monday and most expensive on Wednesday. Tuesday is also best avoided. Fuel prices increase before and during long weekends. Rent a diesel – the fuel is cheaper and significantly less fuel is consumed.

Virtually all gas stations (*Tankstelle*) are self-service – fill up and pay at the cashier before moving your car. Most, but not all, accept credit cards.

Osnabrück
Groß Ippener
1
E37
1
E37
Oldenburg
Delmenhorst
~~Groß Mackenstedt~~
28
E22
322

Germany has the largest highway network after the USA. The famous autobahns (the German plural is Autobahn*en*) sometimes are without speed restrictions, but often are so crowded that speeds drop to a crawl. Speed limits on autobahns are generally between 100 and 130 km/h and well signposted. Autobahns have the prefix A before the number – the more correct prefix BAB is seldom seen – and they use blue road signs. Autobahn exits are numbered both on the exit signs and on all maps.

Dual carriageways that are not official autobahns use yellow road signs and have a speed limit of 120 km/h if not otherwise restricted. These roads usually have a prefix B (*Bundes*/Federal road). On other country roads that have the prefix B or L (*Länder*/State road), the speed limit is 100 km/h, but often a lower speed is imposed.

In town, the speed limit is 50 km/h, if not otherwise stated. This applies as soon as the town is entered – yellow signs are posted with the town name – without any further announcement of the limit. In residential areas, the speed limit is often 30 km/h.

When arriving in towns, follow the directions to the *Historische Altstadt* (historical Old Town) or *Zentrum* (center). It is usually best to park in parking garages on the edge of the Old Town area.

TRAFFIC FINES

It is illegal to try to hurry any other driver – flashing and honking on the autobahn as well as driving too close to a car ahead can result in heavy fines. Hogging the left lane is illegal and passing cars on the right on an autobahn results in very heavy fines per car passed and usually leads to suspension of your driving license. Road rage is considered a serious misdemeanor – showing someone the finger can be very expensive.

Parking fines are low, but if a car is towed away, and many cities do this, the costs and time required getting the car back spiral.

Traffic fines are payable on the spot – receipts are always given – and are usually less than when paid later. Never argue or swear at the police – the fine per insult can be as high as €1,500 and each insult is counted separately.

Never drive without insurance. After an accident, costs are usually apportioned between the drivers and it is rare for one party to carry 100% of the costs. The first rule of driving in Germany is your responsibility to avoid an accident. The party that had the right of way but behaved like an idiot defending his position can generally expect to carry the heavier financial burden. Although it is often legal to speed on the autobahns, insurance companies tend to succeed in reducing their responsibility for an accident by blaming the driver for negligence and dangerous driving.

By Air

Flying inside Germany is seldom a sensible option and even less so in Bavaria. If in a hurry, it makes sense to fly from say Munich to Berlin or other East German cities due to the lack of high-speed railways. But flights from Nürnberg to Munich are only used for connecting flights to further destinations. Despite a growing number of German low-cost carriers, most operate on European routes, leaving German domestic flights generally expensive. A useful source of information is www.billigflieger.de.

By Boat

Most major rivers and lakes have boat trips. These are mostly day excursions and relevant operators are listed in the destination chapters later in the guide.

Longer multi-day trips are available, with one- to two-week cruises particularly popular on combinations of the Rhine, Main, and Danube. Passau is a major departing point for cruises on the Danube, either farther into Bavaria or downstream into Austria, Hungary, and beyond. Two large, multi-day riverboat cruise operators are **Viking River Cruises**, 21820 Burbank Boulevard, Woodland Hills, CA 91367, ☎ 1-877-668-4546, www.vikingrivercruises.com, and **Peter Deilmann Cruises**, 1800 Diagonal Rd Suite 170, Alexandria, VA 22314, ☎ 01-800-348-8287, www.deilmann-cruises.com.

By Taxi

Taxis don't normally roam the streets and are either found at a taxi stand or ordered by telephone. Almost any shop, restaurant, or hotel will be willing to order one. Taxis can be expensive but often make sense for groups of three or four. The fare is always per meter inside city limits but a price is often agreed upon if traveling outside cities or long distance.

Public Transit

Germany generally has a very good, if pricey, public transportation network. In cities, virtually every place can easily be reached without a private car. In most cities, tickets need to be validated before boarding trains and usually on board buses and trams. The validation stamp must be on the front of the ticket; when in doubt stamp both sides. Riding without a ticket results in on-the-spot fines of at least €30 and eviction from the train at the next station. Most cities offer day tickets that are worthwhile if the system is used more than twice.

Emergency Numbers: For the police dial 110 and for the fire brigade and ambulance dial 112.

Embassies & Consulates

Many countries have consulates in Munich but in an emergency, it is generally better first to contact your embassy in Berlin, which will refer you to the consulate in Munich or Frankfurt if they can deal with your problem.

USA

American travelers in need of consular assistance should contact the Embassy of the United States, berlin.usembassy.gov, Neustädtische Kirchstraße 4-5, 10117 Berlin, ☎ 030-83-050. The Consular Section is at Clayallee 170, 14195 Berlin. For American Citizen Services routine calls, dial ☎ 030-832-9233 or, in emergencies only, ☎ 030-83-050.

The American Consulate General in Frankfurt, Gießener Straße 30, 60435 Frankfurt, ☎ 069-75-350, www.frankfurt.usconsulate.gov, also deals with most consular matters.

The Consulate General of the United States, Königinstraße 5, 80539 Munich, ☎ 089-28-880, www.munich.usconsulate.gov, provides a more limited consular service

Canada

The Canadian Embassy is in the Internationalen Handelszentrum, Friedrichstraße 95, 10117 Berlin, ☎ 030-203-120, www.kanada.de.

Money

VISA
MasterCard

In Germany, the normal bank cash card is also a debit card and the preferred way of paying. Credit cards can be used in most shops, hotels, and restaurants but some, especially in rural areas may insist on cash. Using ATMs generally gives the best exchange rates and the lowest costs. Check with your bank before leaving whether your card and PIN are valid abroad. Some foreign banks have agreements with German banks allowing for lower service charges.

Following the introduction of the euro, exchange bureaus have declined dramatically in number, but are available at main stations and airports.

Traveler's checks are seldom used in Germany and often incur hefty service fees. If you do use them, stick to American Express or Thomas Cook.

Currency

Germany uses the euro (€), which is dived into 100 cents (c). The euro comes in €5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500 notes and in €1 and €2 coins. Coins are available in 1, 2, 5, 10, 20, and 50 c.

Former German Marks (DM) and *pfennig* can only be exchanged at a branch of the German Bundesbank (Federal Reserve).

Avoid the €100, €200, and €500 notes – they are often refused in smaller establishments, especially if you try to use them for small payments. The €50 note is the most frequently forged – they often enter circulation at vending machines. Hold on to €1 and €2 coins – although most vending machines accept notes, people using coins experience the urge to kick the machines less often.

All Germans have EC (Electronic Cash) or Maestro cards. They work like debit cards but are not the same as credit cards. Establishments that accept EC cards do not necessarily accept Visa, MasterCard, or American Express.

Taxes

Value Added Tax (Mehrwertsteuer/MWST) is usually 19% but always included in the advertised prices. Non-European travelers can reclaim some tax when departing from the European Union for goods purchased in shops participating in the VAT refund scheme. These stores have an English brochure explaining the finer details – note that the goods must be shown at customs on departure before the tax can be reclaimed. Frankfurt and Munich airports have desks where the tax can be reclaimed in cash on departure. VAT on hotels, food, and services consumed while in Europe is not refundable.

In Germany, all prices advertised must include all taxes. In some spa towns, a spa tax of up to €3 may be added to the hotel price, but this seldom exceeds €2 per adult per night.

A deposit may be charged separately on drinks sold in plastic bottles or cans – this is currently between 15 c and 25 c. The system is still in flux and sometimes this deposit can only be reclaimed at the shop where the bottle was purchased. However, it is increasingly possible to reclaim the deposit at any shop selling the same kind of drinks.

Tipping

Tipping is less frequent than in most Anglo-Saxon countries. In restaurants, service is generally included and rounding up to the next euro or round number is often acceptable. Tipping 10%, except in upscale international places, is generous but appreciated. Give the tip directly to the server or, when you want them to keep the change, say "Thank you" or "Danke schön" when handing over the payment. Leaving money on the table is sometimes considered rude, but not the ultimate insult as it is in some other parts of Europe.

Similarly, for taxi drivers round up to the next euro or round number. Tip bellhops in hotels around €1 per bag – often it will be refused in embarrassment. Don't tip anyone else.

Food & Drink

Traditional Bavarian food is hearty but much of modern German cooking is as healthy and low fat as available in any modern country. It is a little-known fact that Germany has more Michelin-star chefs than any other country but France. Admittedly, Bavaria is not bringing the averages up but fine food can easily be found and not only in the major cities. This guide lists numerous restaurants that serve local specialties – updated with more modern notions that consider the need for fresh produce and lower fat. Bavaria also has many gourmet restaurants and fine food is easily found in most towns.

It is often joked that Bavarian cuisine gives only a passing nod to vegetables but that less true now. Granted, vegetarians are going to suffer from limited choice in Bavaria and strict vegans may have to cook for themselves but, except in beer halls and taverns, fresh vegetables and especially salads are popular.

Although the trend is toward three meals a day, the traditional five-meal day is still popular. This involves breakfast, usually eaten at home, with bread or cereal, yoghurt, cheese, eggs, etc. A second breakfast is often enjoyed around 9 or 10 am, shortly after hitting the desk or shops and usually involving a sweet pastry. Lunch is usually between noon and 2 pm and is often the main meal of the day. *Kaffee und Kuchen* (coffee and cake) is an almost sacred tradition at around 3 pm. Dinner is usually fairly early, between 6 and 8 pm. It is usually cooked if it's the main meal of the day; otherwise it is mainly bread.

In Munich and southern Bavaria, *Weißwurst* (white sausage) is often eaten as a mid-morning snack. In contrast to other sausages that are usually sold by the pair, Weißwurst should be ordered in odd numbers (1, 3, or 5). Traditionally, it is never eaten after noon. The skin is not eaten and it is good form to push the meat out by hand, though using a knife and fork is acceptable. *Weißwurst* is mostly veal but, as with any kind of sausage, it is best not to get into specifics.

In mostly rural Bavaria, *Brotzeit* (literally, bread time) is usually a low-cost meal served in the late afternoon, but it can also be late morning, and consists of bread, cold meats and cheese. It is especially common in hiking areas and is served by most guesthouses after 4 pm only.

Beer is still hugely popular in Germany and nowhere more so than in Bavaria. Around 600 breweries operate in Bavaria and beer is exported to over 140 countries. However, most breweries are small and serve only local communities. The local per capita consumption is around 145 liters/300 pints per year.

Aufseß, a community of 1,400 in Franconian Switzerland, is served by four active breweries!

Apfelsaftschorle, a mixture of apple juice and soda water, is the most popular non-alcoholic drink served in Germany after water. It is low in calories and socially acceptable on any occasion. Although other soft drinks and colas are generally available, it is seldom drunk with a meal. Although all municipal water is safe to drink, and actually has higher safety requirements than bottled water, many Germans prefer to drink bottled water. Do not expect tap water to be served in restaurants. Water, beer, soft drinks, and *Schorle* usually cost about the same in restaurants, with beer often slightly cheaper. Wine, both domestic and imported, is also available by the glass in most establishments.

Electricity

Electricity is 230V, 50 Hz. Two round-pin plugs are used, with grounding possible in all plugs. Some hotels may have 110V flat-pin plugs for shavers, but do not count on it. Adaptors are best bought prior to departure, at airports or in the travel sections of larger department stores.

Media

MAGAZINE
DAILY NEWS

Surprisingly little is published in English here. In major cities, English-language magazines and newspapers are generally available from bookstores – the main station is a good place to look.

English-language radio and television are also rare. Many satellite and cable services carry BBC News and CNN at most. Even in top hotels, it is unlikely that non-news programs will be available other than pay-per-view movie services.

Medical

Germany has an excellent health care system, with more doctors than the country actually requires. The system is relatively expensive, though. Medical insurance is a precondition for entering Germany, although seldom checked unless you need to apply for a visa.

Doctors and pharmacists generally speak very good English. Consultation hours are short and it is advisable not to get sick on Wednesday afternoons, weekends, or at night. Emergency services are, of course, available 24 hours.

All medicine, even aspirin and cough syrup, can only be bought from pharmacies (*Apotheke*). Price controls were recently relaxed but prices are still virtually the same everywhere. Pharmacies are very common and always identified by a large, red “A.”

It is wise to bring prescription medicine, as well as the original prescription with, but, to avoid problems at customs, do not carry more medicine than actually needed for the duration of a holiday.

Restrooms

German restrooms (*Toilette*/WC) are invariably clean, well equipped, and often have an attendant present. Restrooms are often charged for in fast-food restaurants, shopping malls, and gas stations. *Gebührenpflichtig* means the charge is compulsory; otherwise, it is up to the discretion of the user. A minimum of 25 c is usually requested but, due to the absence of quarter coins, most people give more.

According to German law, any restaurant where people can sit down must have at least three restrooms – one each for staff, women, and men. (In some areas, this rule has been relaxed for places with fewer than 12 seats.) This helps to explain the popularity of *Stehcafés* (literally “standing cafés”), where patrons can stand and eat but not sit down. Restaurants usually do not charge for the use of restrooms by patrons but fast-food chains in downtown areas often do.

Restrooms in museums and hotels are invariably free and very clean.

International symbols are usually used, but otherwise “*Herren*” means gents and “*Damen*” means ladies.

Shopping

Germany’s famously restrictive shopping hours have been relaxed in recent years. Shops are generally allowed to open from 8 am to 8 pm, but are closed on Sunday. Only bona fide souvenir shops are allowed to open on Sundays. Shops in railway stations and at gas stations are not bound by the same restrictions. Shops in rural areas usually have shorter hours, often close for lunch, and are unlikely to open on Saturday afternoon.

The German Constitutional Court recently ruled that shopping hours are the preserve of states, allowing individual states to set their own shopping hours, except Sundays when stores should largely remain closed. Although Berlin and Hesse were quick to move to longer hours, conservative Bavaria is highly unlikely to adapt 24-hour shopping any time soon.

Telephones

Cellular phones bought outside Europe generally do not function in Germany. Public phones are available but many require a charge card rather than cash. Many hotels still add enormous surcharges on telephone use, including high fixed charges for otherwise toll free numbers.

It is usually worth using an international carrier such as ATT when phoning internationally. For the best savings, buy discount telephone cards from telephone shops, usually in the station area. Internet cafés are fairly rare in Germany but can generally be found near the main train station.

German telephone numbers are of unequal length and use an area code followed by the specific number. The telephone number of a major business is often shorter than its fax number. When dialing from abroad, use country code 49 and drop the first zero of the regional code. If not using a discount carrier, dial 00 from inside Germany to make international calls.

Mail

Stamps can be bought from post offices, many hotels, and often from souvenir shops. For postcards the standard rate for German and European destinations is €0.45 and for all other destinations €1.

German addresses are typically three lines only: person/company name, street name followed by the number, and ZIP code (PLZ) with town name. If the addressee's name is not on the mailbox, the mail will not be delivered. If sending mail to someone staying with friends or family, ensure that the house occupant's name is also on the envelope. (A “D” in front of the ZIP code can replace Germany in the address but it depends on the country where the letter is mailed. In Germany itself, the D should not be added.)

Dates & Time

In Germany, time is always written using the 24-hour clock, e.g. 8:30 is always in the morning and 20:30 at night. In spoken German, the 12-hour clock is more common.

Dates are written as year.month.day, or day.month.year, or day.month. Therefore, 2007.08.06, 06.08.2007, and 06.08 are all

August 6, 2007. The names of the months are close to English: Januar, Februar, März, April, Mai, Juni, Juli, August, September, Oktober, November, and Dezember. Days of the week are Montag, Dienstag, Mittwoch, Donnerstag, Freitag, Samstag (or Sonnabend), and Sonntag. In abbreviations, the first two letters of the day are used.

Costs

Accommodations

The scale at right is used throughout the book. The rate is what the average guest can expect on non-event nights, rather than the rack rate.

HOTEL PRICE CHART	
Cost per night for two with tax	
€	Under €50
€€	€50-€100
€€€	€101-€150
€€€€	Over €150

German hotels are generally lower-priced than in other Western European countries. Munich is much cheaper than, for example, Paris or London.

German hotel prices are often quoted per person rather than per room. Fortunately, the quoted price always includes all taxes, with the exception of spa taxes, which are usually charged only in small spa towns and rarely exceed €2 per person per night. Except for luxury hotels, breakfast is usually offered for free. That means exactly that – not taking breakfast gives no discount. In cities, parking is generally charged separately and usually around €16 but more at some top hotels.

Hotel prices are generally lowest in November as well as January to March, except, of course, in winter sports areas. Hotel prices in cities are often the highest in September and October, months favored for visiting cities when the weather may be fine but bad weather is less disastrous than when visiting the countryside. Hotels that cater mostly to business travelers often have spectacular discounts over weekends. Sometimes that applies to the entire city, but often different hotels in the same area have different target clienteles and price accordingly. Avoid visiting cities for tourism purposes while major conferences or shows (*Messe*) are on – prices may quadruple.

The official star rating system for hotels is rather useless for travelers and is based on things like the size of the room and number of rooms with private bathrooms. It gives little indication as to the quality of the place or the service. Major hotel guide and reservation services such as the German-based Hotel Reservation Service (HRS), www.hrs.com, Aral, www.aral.de, and Michelin, www.michelin.de, use their own ratings instead. It is worth checking directly with hotels to see if they will match the price of discount agencies. Often you may get a better room if directly booked with the hotel, better cancellation options, and no charges upfront.

In addition to well-known international brands such as Intercontinental, Marriott, Hilton, and Crown Plaza, there are several German- and European-based groups. At the top of the range is the **Kempinski Group**, www.kempinski.com, with a small range of superb hotels. The **Steigenberger Group**, www.steigenberger.de, has a wide range of well-managed, up-market hotels and also manages the InterCity hotels, www.intercityhotel.de, that are in major cities and always close to the railway station. The **Romantik Hotels**, www.romantik-hotels.com, have a wide variety of very pleasant hotels, often in smaller towns, with romantic settings and usually good restaurants. (However, note that this group charges full price for children over three years old.) The **Dorint Group**, www.dorint.com, has a large portfolio of mostly modern, well-managed hotels with stylish, modern interiors. It recently became part of the French **Accor Group**, www.accor-hotels.com, and some hotels may be re-branded. The Accor group also includes the Sofitel, Mercure, Novotel, and Ibis brands. The **Ibis hotels** are low-price options mostly close to the railway stations in major cities. Facilities are modern and clean but low price and without thrills. A very safe budget choice without nasty surprises.

Most hotels in Bavaria, especially outside Munich, are family-run and range from large, luxury establishments to small, hotel pensions. These generally offer more personality than chain hotels. Many hotels have been managed by the same family for generations. They don't hide behind anonymous masks – often a picture of the owners and staff is more prominent on the hotel's website than the hotel itself.

A "**hotel garni**" is a hotel without a restaurant. However, breakfast is almost always available on the premises.

In some cities and in most typical vacation areas, **apartments** and **holiday homes** (*Ferienwohnung/Haus*) can be rented. The minimum rental period is usually a week, but sometimes only three days are required. This is a cost effective and convenient form of accommodation, especially for families and small groups.

A pleasant way to save on accommodation is to rent a room (*Zimmer*) in a **private house**. Rooms can usually be had for €20 per night and sometimes for less than €10 – a big eater can make a profit on the included breakfast alone. However, do note that extra charges sometimes apply for taking a shower or bath.

Holidays on **farms** are popular all over Bavaria and can involve either a rented room in the farmhouse or a separate vacation home on the farm. Prices are generally low and hospitality high. For information, contact the regional tourist information offices.

Rooms and vacation homes are best booked in advance through the local tourist information office. Sometimes it is possible on-line, but more often it is still done via a non-automated system. It is, however, easier to leave the details to the tourist office rather than to contact many individual places to enquire about vacancies. Both rooms and vacation homes can often be rented spontaneously – look out for the "frei" (vacant) signs in holiday areas.

Holiday houses, rooms, farm stays, and even smaller hotels may not necessarily accept credit cards. Full payment is often due in cash on arrival.

YOUTH HOSTELS IN BAVARIA

Most hostels in Bavaria are part of the Deutsche Jugendherberge (DJH/German Youth Hostels) organization. In Bavaria, preference is given to travelers under 27 years old, except when traveling with your own children or a group that are younger. Generally, over-27s cannot make advance reservations, can only be accepted in a hostel late in the day if space is available, and pay a slightly higher rate. Information on all hostels is available from Deutsches Jugendherbergswerk Landesverband Bayern, Mauerkircherstraße 5, 81679 München, ☎ 089-922-0980, fax 089-9220-9840, www.djh-bayern.de. Many accept online reservations at the same web address. Hostels cost around €15 to €30 per person per night in dormitories. You need to be a German or International Youth Hostel member but can sign up on the spot at any hostel.

Camping sites are numerous in Bavaria and generally well equipped. However, many are firmly in the hands of long-term campers, who occupy the best lots.

Restaurants

The chart shows costs for a main course with a standard drink (water, beer, or soft drink).

DINING PRICE CHART

Main course with beverage	
€	Under €10
€€	€10-€20
€€€	€21-€35
€€€€	Over €35

Germany has a wide range of restaurant types. At the bottom end of the scale is the ***Imbiss*** where take-out snacks such as sandwiches, sausages, and Döner Kebab can be bought. One step up is the ***Stehcafé***(€) – literally standing cafés, as high tables are provided but no chairs. These are usually linked to bakeries or delis and a convenient place for a fast and often cheap meal or coffee.

Fast food restaurants (€) such as McDonalds and Burger King are also popular and generally look just like they do at home. Self-service restaurants are usually found in department stores.

The most popular restaurants in Germany are termed ***Gaststätte*** (€-€€) – a combination restaurant, inn, and bar. These are generally informal, serving local dishes and offering the best value. The daily specials advertised outside on blackboards are usually the best deals and served fastest. In rural areas, as well as along country roads and hiking trails, *Gaststätten* are found with great frequency. Most are closed one day per week, usually Monday.

Cafés (€-€€) in all shapes and sizes are popular and especially fashionable in Munich. Coffee is usually served strong and free refills are very rare. **Formal restaurants** (€€-€€€€) are mostly found in cities and the better ones are often in hotels.

RESTAURANT TIPS

Service in German restaurants can sometimes be shockingly bad. Upon arrival, find your own seat. Never wait to be seated – the servers are way too busy ignoring the patrons who are already seated to pay attention to new arrivals. It is quite common to share a table with strangers at busy times – no small talk except “Bon Appetit*”* (*Mahlzeit*) and goodbye is required.

The bill is only presented on request. At the end of a meal, tell the server *Bitte zahlen!* (Pay, please). It often takes an astonishingly long time for the bill to be produced. When in a hurry, ask for the bill when the coffee arrives.

Restaurants are generally open from 11 am to late at night. It is not uncommon, especially in rural areas, for restaurants to close between 2:30 and 5 pm. In rural areas, Gaststätten are open throughout the day on Sunday to cater for hikers and other visitors on day excursions.

Sightseeing & Events

Top museums seldom cost more than €5 and discount tickets are usually available to tourists who plan to see several sights in the same area. Paying €10 or more to enter a sight is the absolute exception.

The admission fees listed in this guide are the maximums. This is what healthy, solo travelers generally between 25 and 55 can expect to be charged. Discounts are usually available for children, scholars, students, the legally unemployed, disabled, senior citizens, and families – proof of status is required and the discount should be asked for when purchasing the tickets. The specific rules for *Ermäßigt* (reduced) prices differ from place to place.

Holidays

Public Holidays

In Germany, vacation days are a matter for the individual states. Most vacations are linked to the religious calendar, with the southern states generally following Catholic holidays and the northern states Protestant ones. Bavaria has more holidays (13) than any other state.

On holidays, the opening hours for Sunday are usually followed, but that is not always the case and not for all holidays. Expect most sights to be closed over Christmas and New Year's and often over Easter as well. All sights and most restaurants will be closed on the afternoons of December 24th and 31st.

> Holidays listed without dates annually move according to the church calendar.

- January 1 – New Year's Day
- January 6 – Three Kings' Day/Epiphany (only in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, and Saxony-Anhalt)
- Good Friday
- Easter Monday
- May 1 – May Day
- Asuncion (Thursday)
- Pentecost (Monday)
- Corpus Christi (only in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, Hesse, North-Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, and Saarland)
- August 15 – Assumption of the Virgin Mary (only Bavaria and Saarland)
- October 3 – Day of National Unity
- October 31 – Reformation Day (only in Brandenburg, Mecklenburg-Vorpommern, Saxony, Saxony-Anhalt, and Thuringia)
- November 1 – All Saints' Day (only in Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, North-Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, and Saarland)
- December 25 & 26 – Christmas

Festivals & Major Events

- Germany's celebratory year starts just seconds after midnight on January 1 with abundant fireworks displays and runs through the year to Christmas Eve. Many festivals are coordinated with the religious calendar and, with much of Bavaria staunchly Roman Catholic, festivals and parades are frequent and popular.

- January and February see **Carnival** (*Fastnacht/Fasching*) celebrations in the mostly Roman Catholic parts of the country. Parades are held in many towns and cities on ***Fasching Dienstag*** (Shrove Tuesday/Mardi Gras) or the preceding weekend.
- In March, the strong beer season celebrates the end of **Lent** and the reopening of many beer gardens.
- Religious parades during **Easter** and **Pentecost** are common in the mainly Roman Catholic areas, with processions in Upper Bavaria particularly colorful.
- From May to October an amazing number of summer cultural festivals are arranged throughout Germany. Open-air performances are particularly popular. Large fireworks displays are common
- In August, the **Wagner Festival** in Bayreuth has some 65,000 tickets available, giving applicants a 10% chance of success.
- **Wine harvest festivals** are scheduled, mostly in August and September, throughout the wine producing areas (many non-wine producing cities happily participate too).
- Munich's famous three-week **Okotberfest** is mainly held in September and ends the first Sunday in October. Less famous, but similar in style is the **Gaubodenfestival**, held in August in Straubing.
- On November 11, **St Martin's Festival**, children parade throughout the country in honor of Germany's patron saint.
- **Advent**, the four weeks leading up to Christmas, is one of the loveliest seasons in Germany. Christmas decorations, often remarkably tasteful, are seen in all shops, many towns, and private residences. Most towns have Christmas markets at least on weekends and many cities have markets during the whole Advent period.
- **Christmas** is celebrated on the evening of December 24. Expect most businesses, shops, and restaurants to close around noon, if they open at all that day. Rooms in large hotels in major cities often go for a song, while smaller establishments may be closed for the season or insist on reservations from Christmas through New Year's.

Adventures

Bavaria is rich in historical and cultural sights. However, it also has a pristine natural environment and outdoor activities are very popular.

Hiking (*wandern*) is, after reading, the most popular activity in Germany. On a Sunday, you'll never walk alone. It often seems as if half the population is rambling through the woods. *Gaststätten* (a combination inn, restaurant and bar) have especially long hours on Sunday with warm meals available at all hours. Hiking maps are available from all bookshops and tourist information offices, who can advise on local hiking clubs that welcome guests. Public transportation often makes circular routes unnecessary. Tourist offices and hotels can arrange luggage transfers on long-distance hikes.

Cycling as a principal holiday activity is increasingly popular, with many dedicated cycling routes and most roads open to cyclists. Cycling maps are available from all bookshops and tourist information offices. Bicycles can usually be rented from shops close to train stations. Cyclists have the same rights and obligations as drivers and can be fined for ignoring traffic rules. Mountain biking is increasingly trendy but often restricted to special paths wider than six feet/two meters to limit environmental damage. Many towns have active cycling clubs that welcome guests on cycling daytrips. For information on local clubs, contact the tourist office or **Landesgeschäftsstelle Bayern ADFC**, Landwehrstraße 16, 80336 München, ☎ 089-553-575, www.adfc-bayern.de.

Canoeing is possible on many German rivers. The two major rivers in Bavaria are the Danube and the Main but, since both carry commercial traffic, their tributaries are more popular with canoeists.

Horseback riding is popular throughout Bavaria but those that offer it are mostly very small. Tourist information offices can provide details on those that welcome casual riders.

Angling always requires a license – fishing without one is a serious criminal offence. Licenses are usually sold through the tourist office or sometimes local hotels.

Although the Bavarian Alps are somewhat lower than those farther south and west, they do offer some fine **skiing** opportunities. Famous downhill skiing resorts include Berchtesgaden, Reit im Winkl, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and Oberstdorf, while cross-country skiing is very popular in the lowlands north of the Alps as well as wherever sufficient snowfall allows it.

Special Interest

Senior Citizens

Germans are generally frequent travelers and few age groups are more actively on the road than seniors. Travelers over age 55 can expect all kinds of discounts when traveling in Germany. However, note that the discount should be asked for when paying or making reservations and proof of age may be requested.

More often than not, senior citizens qualify for reduced admission fees (*Ermäßigt*), which can mean a discount of 30 to 50% at many sights. Some hotels and other service providers also give discounts.

Seniors frequently use the railways. Young Germans tend to respect the aged and few old people ever have to haul their own luggage into a train or up to the overhead bins. Only rarely do you have to ask for help.

Children

For many reasons, Germans have famously few children, but the tourism industry is not to blame. This is particularly true in Bavaria where children are often the target audience and not considered an unavoidable addition to the group. Children under 15 travel free on German railways when accompanied by a parent or grandparent. Children and students pay reduced admission everywhere.

Most hotels allow children up to age 16 at no charge in their parents' room. Separate rooms are often available at a steep discount. Many hotels have family rooms. Most restaurants have child seats, although baby-changing tables are not always guaranteed.

Disabled

Facilities for disabled travelers range from excellent to very limited. Many historical sights are completely inaccessible to the disabled. Many towns and regions have made considerable efforts to improve accessibility. It is a good idea to contact the local tourist information offices and enquire about options – many have special brochures with information on the accessibility of sights, restaurants, and hotels, especially for wheelchair users.

Information Sources

Tourist Information

Tourist information is available from the **German National Tourist Board** (Deutsche Zentrale für Tourismus), Beethovenstrasse 69, 60325 Frankfurt am Main, Germany, www.germany-tourism.de. In the USA contact the **German National Tourist Office**, 122 East 42nd Street, New York, NY 10168-0072, ☎ 212-661-7200 or 800-651-7010, fax 212-661-7174, www.cometogermany.com. In Canada, contact the **German National Tourist Office**, 480 University Ave., Suite 1410, Toronto, Ontario M5G 1V2, Canada, ☎ 416-968-1685.

Information on Bavaria is available from **Bayern Tourismus**, Leopoldstraße 146, 80804 München, ☎ 089-212-3970, fax 089-2123-9799, www.bayern.by. It is also useful to contact the regional tourist office, listed at the start of each relevant chapter, before narrowing it down to smaller regions and towns. Not all tourist offices are prepared to mail information internationally, but most have useful websites.

Every town has a tourist information office, which usually has a wealth of information. Most have maps for suggested Old Town walks and often for longer hikes and cycling routes in the region that can range from half an hour to a full day. The maps are worth taking, even if in German only. Many tourist offices also make hotel reservations and reservations for private accommodations, such as holiday homes, rooms, and farm stays.

Internet

Most German towns have official websites, usually as www.*townname*.de. A dash (-) is usually, but not always, used in town names with spaces, e.g. www.bad-reichenhall.de. The German characters ä, ö, ü, and ß are written as ae, oe, ue, and ss in Internet addresses. Although Bavaria has its own domain (.by), most websites prefer to use the Germany domain (.de). Germans take Internet privacy very seriously – you will never receive email unless specifically asking for it and, even then, each email has a simple single-click opt-out option.

Language

English is widely understood in Germany even if many Germans are unable to express themselves in English. In most hotels and restaurants English-speaking staff can be found. The level of spoken English is generally very high in Bavaria, especially in the tourism industry in Upper Bavaria and Munich. Guided tours are mostly in German, but ask for an English-language sheet when buying tickets, not at the start of tours.

Although English and German are sister languages, many English-speakers find German grammar and pronunciation difficult. German words can be famously long, as a single concept is usually written as a single word. Nouns are always capitalized.

German is a phonetic language and all letters are pronounced. The *Umlauten* ä, ö, and ü change the sound of the vowel, while ß is pronounced like a single "s." These letters can also be written as ae, oe, ue, and ss, but the reverse is not always true.

In Bavaria, the greeting “Grüß Gott!” (literally, may you be greeted by God) is commonly used rather than the standard German “Guten Tag” (good day).

A Few Useful Words

Altstadt – Old Town
Ausgang – Exit
Auto – Car
Bahn – Train/railway
Bahnhof – Station
Benzin – Gas/fuel for a car
Berg – Mountain
Besetzt – Occupied
Bitte – Please
Brücke – Bridge
Burg – Castle/fortress
Danke (schön) – Thank you
Denkmal – Memorial
Dom – Cathedral
Eingang – Entrance
Fachwerk – Half-timbered
Fähre – Ferry
Fahrrad – Bicycle
Flughafen – Airport
Fluss – River
Frei – Free/unoccupied
Gaststätte – Restaurant (inn)
Geöffnet – Open
Geschlossen – Closed
Hauptbahnhof – Main railway station
Ja (wohl) – Yes
Kein Zutritt – No admission/do not enter
Kirche – Church
Kloster – Monastery
Kreuz – Cross
Markt – Market (square)
Meer – Sea/ocean
Nein – No
PKW – Car

Platz – Square
Rathaus – Town hall
Schloss – Castle/palace
See – Lake
Straße – Street
Straßenbahn – Tram
Tankstelle – Gas station
Weg – Way
Zug/Züge – Train/trains

Munich

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Information Sources 63
- Getting Around 63
- Sightseeing 63
- Cultural Events 85
- Festivals 86
- Shopping 88
- Adventures 89
- Where to Stay 92
- Where to Eat 100

Munich (*München*) is Germany's third-largest city, with 1.3 million inhabitants, but it is by far the city most Germans say they would prefer to live in. It is culturally rich, with a very high quality of life.

Munich is perhaps most famous for its Oktoberfest and for beer in general, but it also has fine museums and a wide range of cultural offerings. The three Pinakotheken form one of the largest art collections in Europe and the Deutsches Museum is one of the largest science and technology museums in the world. Munich has been a royal residence for around seven centuries and has some of the most splendid Baroque palaces in Europe – the Residenz, Schloss Nymphenburg, and Schloss Schließheim. It has a wide variety of architecture, from the old Gothic churches to the modern glass, tent-like roof of the 1972 Olympic Arena and the BMW headquarters.

The city was founded in the ninth century as a small village near a Benedictine monastery. The name is derived from the old-German term for monk. In 1225, Munich became a ducal seat and, from 1504, was the undisputed capital of Bavaria. It remained the primary residence of the ruling Wittelsbach family up to the abolition of the monarchy in 1918. They were avid builders and created palaces and churches, as well as whole city blocks. Bavaria was elevated to a kingdom in 1806 and the kings were generally enlightened rulers who attracted artistic talent to the city. In the late 19th century and prior to the First World War, Munich was an important European cultural center. Its suburb of Schwabing was particularly popular with artists and writers.

The Architectural Tastes of the Bavarian Kings (1806-1918)

King Maximilian I (1806-25) favored the Classical style, while his son Ludwig I (1825-48) admired classical antiquity. Ludwig built the Pinakothek ,(above) Glyptothek, and university in Munich. He also cut the elegant Ludwigstraße through the Old Town. He had a gallery in Schloss Nymphenburg filled with paintings of beautiful women who caught his roving eye. One of them, Lola Montez, a Spanish dancer and opportunist, eventually cost him his throne when her involvement in politics led to a rebel movement. Maximilian II (1848-1864), an avid builder, erected the neo-Renaissance Maximilianeum, the grand station, and lined Maximilianstraße with monumental buildings. He also renovated Schloss Hohenschwangau in a Historicist style.

His son, Ludwig II (1864-86), also known as Mad Ludwig, is probably the most famous of all Bavarian kings. He became king at age 18 and continued the family's building tradition. However, his designs were even more fanciful and included the neo-Romanesque Schloss Neuschwanstein, neo-Baroque Linderhof, and Herrenchiemsee, which was inspired by Versailles. He died in mysterious circumstances days after being deposed in 1886. He was succeeded by another son of Ludwig I, Prince Luitpold (1886-1912), who built the Deutsches Museum and the monumental Prinzregentenstraße. His son, Ludwig III (1912-18) was forced to abdicate at the end of the World War I.

After World War I, Munich briefly fell into the hands of revolutionaries and also saw the foundation of the National Socialist German Labor Party – commonly known as the Nazis. In 1923, its leader, Adolf Hitler, unsuccessfully attempted a coup d'état, but received a ridiculously lenient sentence. Once the Nazis took power in Berlin in 1933, Munich became the "Capital of the Movement" and several buildings were erected or altered to reflect the Nazi views. In 1938, the infamous meeting where Britain, France, and Italy sold out Czechoslovakia took place in Munich.

The city suffered terrible bombardments during the war but rebuilt quickly afterwards. On December 15, 1957, it officially became a city of a million inhabitants. In 1972, it hosted the summer Olympic Games and two years later Germany won the soccer World Cup in the Olympic stadium. Although the center of the city has many historical buildings, the outskirts are very modern. Munich's wealth is built on modern industries. The most famous local companies are BMW (automobiles), Siemens (engineering), and Allianz (insurance).

Most museums in Munich are free on Sunday!

Information Sources

The tourist information office has two branches for casual callers in the Hauptbahnhof and at the Marienplatz. For written or telephone inquiries, contact the **Fremdenverkehrsamt München**, Sendlinger Straße 1, 80331 München, ☎ 089-2339-6500, www.muenchen.de.

Getting Around

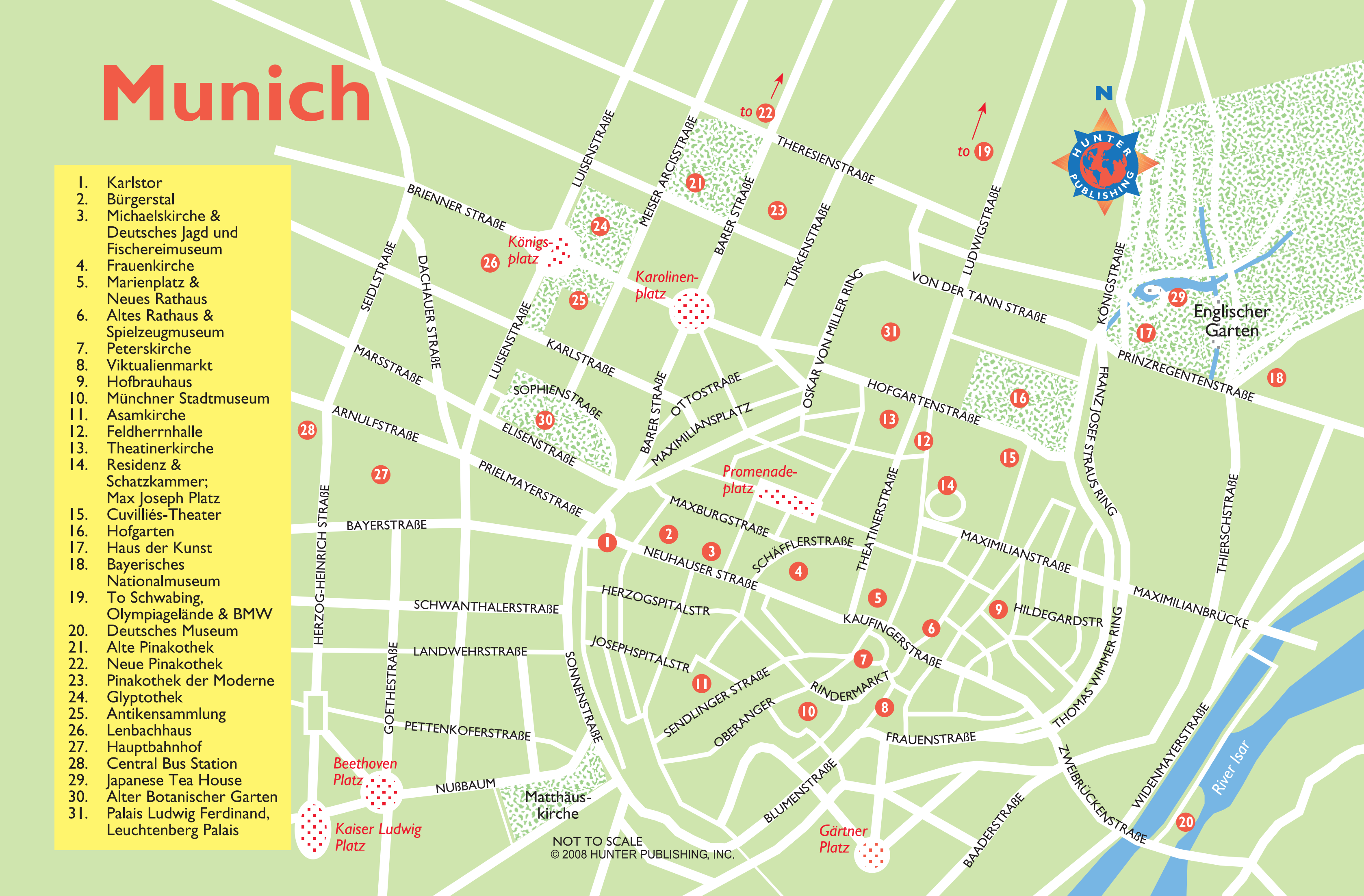
Munich has an excellent public transportation system that combines S-Bahn, U-Bahn, trams, and buses in a single network. Tickets must be validated on the tram or bus and before entering the platform of the S- and U-Bahn. Single and strip tickets are available but day-tickets are more economical if more than two journeys are planned. A day ticket for central Munich is €4.80 per day or €11.80. All sights described below are in the central zone, except the airport, Dachau, and Schleißheim.

Sightseeing

Old Town Pedestrian Zone

Karlsplatz to Frauenkirche: Approaching the Old Town and pedestrian zone from the main station, the first sights that deliver some impression of what is to follow are the monumental buildings at **Karlsplatz**. The square is locally known as *Stachus*, named after a long-gone inn. The Old Town area is entered via the 14th-century **Karlstor** (Karl's Gate).

Munich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NEUHAUSER STRAßE
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SCHWANTHALERSTRAßE
HERZOGSPITALSTR
KAUFINGERSTRAßE
HILDEGARDSTR
THOMAS WIMMER RING
LANDWEHRSTRAßE
JOSEPHSPITALSTR
SENDLINGER STRAßE
RINDERMARKT
OBERANGER
SONNENSTRAßE
GOETHESTRAßE
PETTENKOFERSTRAßE
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NOT TO SCALE

1. Karlstor
2. Bürgerstal
3. Michaelskirche & Deutsches Jagd und Fischereimuseum
4. Frauenkirche
5. Marienplatz & Neues Rathaus
6. Altes Rathaus & Spielzeugmuseum
7. Peterskirche
8. Viktualienmarkt
9. Hofbrauhaus
10. Münchner Stadtmuseum
11. Asamkirche
12. Feldherrnhalle
13. Theatinerkirche
14. Residenz & Schatzkammer; Max Joseph Platz
15. Cuvilliés-Theater
16. Hofgarten
17. Haus der Kunst
18. Bayerisches Nationalmuseum
19. To Schwabing, Olympiagelände & BMW
20. Deutsches Museum
21. Alte Pinakothek
22. Neue Pinakothek
23. Pinakothek der Moderne
24. Glyptothek
25. Antikensammlung
26. Lenbachhaus
27. Hauptbahnhof
28. Central Bus Station
29. Japanese Tea House
30. Alter Botanischer Garten
31. Palais Ludwig Ferdinand, Leuchtenberg Palais

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Karlsplatz *(Christl Reiter/FVAmuc)*

The **Bürgersaal** (Citizens' Hall), Neuhauserstraße 14, ☎ 089-219-9720, has a plain exterior but a richly decorated interior. This church was erected on a citizens' initiative as a prayer hall in the early 18th century. The almost crypt-like lower church area has the tomb of Priest Rupert Mayer, a fierce critic of the Nazis who spent many years in Dachau and died shortly after the war. He was declared a saint in 1987. Artistically, the Baroque Oberkirche (Upper Church) is more interesting. It has many Rococo features, although the main decorations were not restored after World War II. This part of the church is open only from 3 to 5 pm. The rest of the church is open daily from around 6:30 am to 7 pm.

Across the road is the **Augustinerbräu** beer cellar – the oldest of Munich's famous brewing houses, now home of a popular restaurant and beer garden.

The Jesuit **Michaelskirche** (St Michael's Church), Neuhauserstraße 52, ☎ 089-231-7060, was one of the first and is still the largest Renaissance church north of the Alps. It was erected by Duke Wilhelm V between 1583 and 1597. The impressive three-story gabled façade shows 15 of his forebears, going back to the Agilolfingers. All are overshadowed, though, by the bronze statue of the Archangel Gabriel, a masterpiece by Hubert Gerhard (1588). The single-nave interior, with a cradle vault ceiling 20 m/66 ft wide, is mostly white and inspired many of the Baroque churches that would soon follow in southern Germany. The crypt has the graves of 41 Wittelsbach rulers. Opening hours are daily from 8 am to 7 pm.

Previous page: Lenbachhaus *(C. L. Schmitt/FVAmuc)*

The **Deutsches Jagd- und Fischereimuseum** (German Hunting and Fishing Museum), Neuhauser Straße 2, ☎ 089-220-522, www.jagd-fischerei-museum.de, is in an impressive former Gothic church building. The museum is very popular. Displays include stuffed animals, hunting weapons, and the world's largest collection of fish hooks. Despite the name, many items are of non-German origin. Opening hours are daily from 9:30 am to 5 pm, closing at 9 pm on Thursday. Admission is €3.50.

Frauenkirche *(Alfred Müller/FVAmuc)*

The two 98-m/321-ft copper onion-domed towers of the **Frauenkirche** are the symbols of Munich. The official name Domkirche zu Unserer Lieben Frau (Cathedral of Our Dear Lady), Frauenplatz, ☎ 089-290-0820, never really caught on. The Late Gothic church was erected in 1468-88 and has a simple red brick exterior. Inside, it is bright, with mostly white walls. The church is over 100 m/328 ft long and 41 m/134 ft wide. Although damaged in World War II, many parts, including the towers, are original. The rose windows in the choir of the Annunciation date from 1392. From April to October, Monday to Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm, the south tower elevator (€2) will take you to a viewing platform. Do note that it is 86 steps to the elevator and that the views from St Peter (see below) are better. The church is a popular venue for concerts. Opening hours are from around 8 am to 7 pm.

The Devil's Footprint

Cheating the devil made for popular stories in the Middle Ages. According to legend, the architect of the Frauenkirche, Jörg von Halspach, accepted a challenge from the devil to build a church without windows. Until the current High Altar was built in the19th century, it was impossible to see the front windows from the rear of the church. From one spot in the back of the church, the pillars obscure the side windows and the bright church appears to be window-less. At this very spot, the cheated devil stamped his foot in anger and left a footprint with a small hooked tail at the heel. An alternative version has the devil stamping his foot in delight when visiting the church at night and laughing at the stupidity of building a church without windows. The so-called Teufelstritt (Devil's Footprint) is in the center rear of the church almost in-line with the gift shop.

Christkindlmarkt on the Marienplatz *(Fritz Witzig/FVAmuc)*

Marienplatz (Mary's Square) is the heart of Munich and the center of most festivals and protest rallies. In 1638, Prince-Elector Maximilian erected the **Mariensäule** (Mary's Column) to give thanks for the relief of the city from the Swedish threat during the Thirty Years' War. It has a statue of the Virgin made in 1590 by Hubert Gerhard on top of an 11-m/36-ft Corinthian column.

Frauenkriche & Neues Rathaus *(Christl Reiter/FVAmuc)*

The north of the square is occupied by the **Neues Rathaus** (New Town Hall). This neo-Gothic (1867-1908) monumental building looks a bit out of place in Baroque and Rococo Munich but people got used to it. An elevator (€1.50) to the top of the 80-m/262-ft tower is available on weekdays from 9 am to 4 pm, closing at 1 pm on Friday. Particularly popular is the famous **carillon**, with 43 bells, the fourth-largest in

Europe. At 11 am and noon, and in summer at 5 pm as well, it plays a knight's tournament and local dance with 32 life-size figures. At 9 pm, the night watchman and *Münchner Kindl* are blessed by an angel.

At the east is the **Altes Rathaus** (Old Town Hall), a Gothic building from 1474. The Rathaus was severely damaged during World War II but restored in simplified form. The Rathaus incorporated a former defense tower that now houses the **Spielzeugmuseum** (Toy Museum), Marienplatz, ☎ 089-294-001, which shows toys from the past two centuries. It is open daily from 10 am to 5:30 pm. Admission is €3.

Close by is the **Alter Hof** (Old Castle), Burgstraße 8, which was the castle of the Wittelsbach rulers from 1253 to 1474. It is currently used for local government offices but it is worth strolling into the courtyard to see the medieval oriel.

The **Peterskirche** (St Peter's Church), Rindermarkt, ☎ 089-260-4828, is the oldest church in Munich. It dates to the 11th century but has style elements of almost every period since. Its main structure is a triple-nave, 13th-century Gothic basilica but the interior is mostly Baroque. It is 306 steps to the top of the tower for the best views of Munich and the Alps if the skies are clear (€1.50). Opening hours are Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 6 pm and Sunday from 10 am to 7 pm.

Viktualienmarkt *(Lothar Kaster/FVAmuc)*

The nearby **Viktualienmarkt** (Victuals Market) has been in operation since 1807. It is a popular spot, with all kinds of people from businessmen to blue-collar workers grabbing a quick bite to eat or buying fresh produce. The market women are famous for both quick wit and zero tolerance – no self-service here. Do not fret if your school German doesn't work – most non-locals won't understand what they are saying either.

The nearby **Hofbräuhaus** is a legend too. See *Where to Eat* below.

Three blocks southwest of the Marienplatz is the **Münchner Stadtmuseum** (Municipal Museum), St.-Jakobs-Platz 1, ☎ 089-2332-2370, www.stadtmuseum-online.de. It has an eclectic collection ranging from musical instruments and rare movies to puppet theaters and home décor. A star exhibit is the collection of 10 wood-carved, painted and gilded Moriskentänzer (Moorish dancers) made by Erasmus

Grasser in 1480. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €2.50, free on Sunday.

Nearby, close to the Sendlinger Tor, is the **Asamkirche** (Asam Church), Sendlinger Straße 32. The official name is St Johannes Nepomuk Church, but everybody calls it the Asamkirche, named for the two talented Baroque master-builder Asam brothers. Both were multi-talented, but Cosmas Damian (1686-1739) specialized in frescoes and his brother Egid Quirin (1692-1750) focussed on sculpture and stuccowork. They decorated many Baroque churches in Munich and central Europe. They financed and designed the Asamkirche themselves, which helps to explain the harmony of the interior. It is over-the-top Baroque with no square inch left undecorated and all beautifully integrated. Described as a combination of a fanciful grotto and a court theater, it shows off the absolute skill of the two brothers and serves as a remarkable example of Bavarian Late Baroque. There are only 12 rows of pews but enough art to fill a cathedral. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 5:30 pm.

Odeonsplatz: The roads on either side of the Neues Rathaus eventually lead to the Odeonsplatz. At the east side is the huge Residenz complex – see below. At the south is the **Feldherrnhalle** (Field Marshalls' Portico), erected in the 1840s as a copy of the Loggia dei Lanzi in Florence. It has statues of General Tilly (Thirty Years' War) and General Wrede (Napoleonic Wars) guarded by Bavarian lions.

HITLER'S BEER HALL PUTSCH

In 1923, Adolf Hitler, the leader of a minor right-wing political party, decided to take over power in Munich. After a spirited speech in a beer hall – contrary to popular belief it was the Bürgerbräukeller and *not* the Hofbräuhaus – he and his followers marched through the old city in what was supposed to have been the start of a Fascist march on Berlin similar to Mussolini's earlier successful march on Rome. When troops opened fire on the marchers in Odeonsplatz, Hitler threw himself into the gutter with such force that he dislocated his shoulder and was unable to flee.

Unfortunately, Hitler learned from this experience that grabbing power illegally was not a good idea. A decade later he would still employ illegal means but became dictator legally, i.e., with parliamentary approval. As the Feldherrnhalle bore testimony to the 1923 event, a guard of honor was installed here in the Residenzstraße after the Nazis took power. Passersby, who wanted to avoid the obligatory Nazi salute, took a slight detour through the Viscardigasse to pass on the guard-free Theatinerstraße side of the monument.

Theatinerkirche *(www.bayern.by)*

The **Theatinerkirche** (Theatine Church, or officially, St Kajetan), Theatinerstraße 22, is an excellent example of Late Baroque architecture. It was built in 1663-88, with the Rococo façade added a century later by Cuveliés. The interior is mostly white and well lit, with a 71-m/233-ft cupola. The stuccowork is particularly fine. The crypt contains the graves of 25 members of the Wittelsbach dynasty.

North of the Odeonsplatz is the monumental **Ludwigstraße**, commissioned by King Ludwig I in the early 19th century when he made Munich a major European cultural center. The huge neo-Renaissance and neo-Byzantine buildings are interesting but add no life to the area. Once past the Siegestor (Triumphal Arch), the street comes alive as **Leopoldstraße**, lined with cafés and the good life of Bohemian Schwabing.

Residenz: The Wittelsbach family, who ruled Bavaria for 700 years, built the massive Residenz (Residence) complex from 1385 onwards. It has examples of all building styles, with large sections in the Renaissance and Classical styles. The interior, inevitably, also has many Baroque and Rococo rooms. The palace is one of the most important in Germany and, although severely damaged during World War II, it has been restored to its original condition. The complex houses several museums – if time is limited give preference to the Treasury.

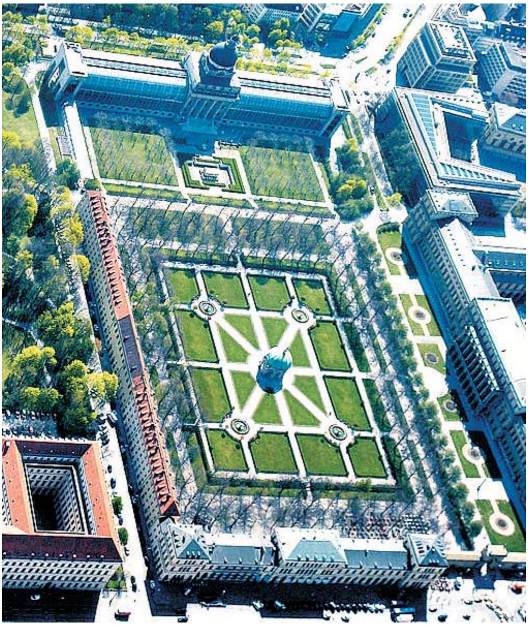
The **Schatzkammer der Residenz** (Treasury in the Residence) contains the treasures of the Wittelsbach family collected over a period of 300 years. It comprises eight rooms and is one of the most important collections of its kind in Europe. Included are the crown (1280) of Heinrich II, a bejeweled small statue of St George Slaying the Dragon (1597), and the royal insignia produced in 1807 after Napoleon had elevated Bavaria to a kingdom. Opening hours are daily from April to mid-October, 9 am to 6 pm, and from mid-October to March, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €6 and includes an excellent English audio guide. A combination ticket with the Residenzmuseum is €9.

Antiquarium in the Residenz *(Wilfried Hösl/FVAmuc)*

The enormous **Residenzmuseum**, Max-Joseph-Platz 3, ☎ 089-290-671, www.schloesser.bayern.de, comprises around 120 rooms of the former palace. The main attraction is the wall and ceiling decorations of the many rooms, as most are without furniture. The museum also has a large porcelain and silverware collection. Highlights include the Antiquarium (1570), which is the largest secular Renaissance hall north of the Alps. It is filled with Roman and Greek busts. Also popular are the Reichen Zimmer (Rich Rooms) in Rococo that were the state rooms during the 18th century, and the Royal Apartments constructed for King Ludwig I in the mid-19th century. The museum has no English signs, making an audio guide or guidebook essential. Opening hours are daily from April to mid-October, 9 am to 6 pm, and from mid-October to March, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €6. A combination ticket with the Treasury is €9.

The **Cuvilliés-Theater** (Altes Residenztheater/Old Residence Theater), Residenzstraße1, ☎ 089-290-671, is a magnificent Rococo theater built in 1751-53 by Francois Cuvilliés. It has four rows of boxes using different designs and decorations. The theater is still in frequent use. Opening hours are daily from April to mid-October, 9 am to 6 pm, and from mid-October to March, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €2.

Englischer Garten & Schwabing



Aerial view of the Hofgarten *(Maximilian Dörrbecker)*

The **Hofgarten** (Royal Garden) is a Renaissance garden between the Residenz complex and the Englischer Garten. It is flanked by 19th-century arcades and the modern Staatskanzlei (State Chancellery). The octagonal temple in the middle of the garden is crowned by Huberd Gerhard's 1594 *Diana.*

In the south end of the Englischer Garten is the **Haus der Kunst** (House of Art), Prinzregentenstraße 1, ☎ 089-211-270, www.hausderkunst.de. It was commissioned by the Nazis to exhibit their ideas of real German art. Hitler opened the building in person (and broke the hammer with the first blow!). It currently has no permanent collection but houses varying temporary exhibitions and events.

Entartete Kunst (Degenerate Art)

In the summer of 1937, while Nazi kitsch went on display in the Haus der Kunst, a separate exhibition of Entartete Kunst (Degenerate Art) opened in the Hofgarten. This exhibition included 300 paintings, 25 sculptures, and 400 graphics that the Nazis considered un-German. The exhibition toured Germany and drew huge crowds – two million in Munich alone. Thanks to the Nazis, huge numbers suddenly became aware of modern art. A further 16,000 works were added to the list – many were destroyed, but some were saved by being sold secretly to private and international collectors to earn foreign exchange. The artists themselves were banned from exhibiting, fired from academic posts, and many ended up in concentration camps or fled abroad.

Southeast of the Englischer Garten is the **Bayerisches Nationalmuseum** (Bavarian National Museum), Prinzregentenstraße 3, ☎ 089-211-2401, www.bayerisches-nationalmuseum.de. It focuses on local art and cultural items but many are world-renowned. A highlight is European sculpture from the Middle Ages to the Art Nouveau period, including works by Tilman Riemenschneider. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 8 pm on Thursday. Admission is €5, free on Sunday.

Nearby is the **Schack-Galerie**, Prinzregentenstraße 9, ☎ 089-2380-5224. It has a collection of 270 German 19th-century paintings. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €2.50.

The **Englischer Garten** (English Garden) is Europe's largest city park. It was laid out as an English landscape park in the early 19th century and is a favored place to relax. In the south of the park is a Japanese Tea House (1972). Toward the middle of the park is a 16-m/52-ft-high classical round temple, the Monopteros (1838). It is supposed to have great views of the Old Town skyline but the number of drug users and undesirables that frequent the place lead many to remain on the rolling lawns. The five-story **Chinesischer Turm** (Chinese Pagoda) of 1760 burned down during World War II but was reconstructed in 1952. In its shade is a 6,000-seat beer garden. Nude sunbathing is still practiced in many parts of the park, although students strolling around naked are much less common nowadays than they were in the 1970s and 1980s.

Englischer Garten *(Torsten Krüger/FVAmuc)*

West of the Englischer Garten is the neighborhood of **Schwabing** – a mythical, nostalgic place for many Germans, a bit like Paris's Left Bank. It saw its golden age at the turn of the 19th century and early 20th century when the neighborhood was crowded with artists of all kinds. Although present Schwabing is not even a shadow of its former self, it is still the liveliest neighborhood with the most popular nightspots and small shops. It tries to cling to its Bohemian tradition but is very much bourgeois, with the trendiest cafés and "in" places. It is most easily reached by U-Bahn (station: Münchner Freiheit).

Deutsches Museum

The Deutsches Museum (German Museum), Museumsinsel 1, ☎ 089-21-791, www.deutsches-museum.de, is one of the largest technology museums in the world. It is on an island in the River Isar and is a vast collection, with around 18,000 scientific and technology items on permanent display. Many working models and frequent demonstrations add further interest. Seeing it all will require a nearly 16-km/10-mile hike. Particularly popular are the various transportation departments that include the first Benz automobile, the first German submarine, early trains and planes, boats, and missiles. Large sections are also devoted to pure science, with physical laws and chemical reactions explained. Further exhibitions include paper and porcelain making, photography, weather prediction, electronics, agriculture, and astronomy. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 5 pm; on Wednesday, selected collections are open until 9 pm. Admission is €7.50.

Pinakotheken Viertel & Königsplatz

Alte Pinakothek *(Bjarne Geiges/FVAmuc)*

The **Pinakotheken Viertel** (Art Gallery Quarter) is an informal name for the area a few blocks northeast of the Hauptbahnhof that houses several major art galleries. The most impressive are the three Pinakotheken that together present art from the Middle Ages to the present. The individual collections are among the best in Germany, with the Alte Pinakothek one of the best in the world.The **Alte Pinakothek** (Old Masters' Gallery), Barer Straße 27, ☎ 089-238-052, www.alte-pinakothek.de, is one of the world's greatest collections of European paintings from the Middle Ages to the early 19th century. It is housed in a large early 19th-century neo-Renaissance building reconstructed after World War II. The catalogue reads like a Who's Who of European painters, with excellent works by all the great masters. German, Dutch, and Flemish artists are particularly well represented. The

Rubens collection is one of the largest in the world. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 8 pm on Tuesday. Admission is €5, free on Sunday.

Across the road is the **Neue Pinakothek** (New Art Gallery), Barer Straße 29, ☎ 089-2380-5195, www.neue-pinakothek.org. The post-modern building was completed in 1981 to house the mainly 19th-century art collection. The sculptures and paintings cover all periods from Rococo to Art Nouveau. It has works by all the famous Impressionist artists but it is really the German works that stand out. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 8 pm on Wednesday. Admission is €5, free on Sunday.

Neue Pinakothek *(Jürgen Sauer/FVAmuc)*

Tickets: Day tickets for all three Pinakotheken are €12 – a bargain for those visiting the Pinakothek der Moderne. All are free on Sunday.

Adjacent, the **Pinakothek der Moderne** (Modern Art Gallery), Barer Straße 40, ☎ 089-2380-5118, www.pinakothek-der-moderne.de, opened in 2002. This glass and steel building houses four collections that together represent the largest modern art gallery in Germany. The exhibition comprises sections on modern art, industrial and graphic design, graphic art, and an architectural museum. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 8 pm on Thursday and Friday. Admission is €9, free on Sunday. The area around **Königsplatz** was destined to become the *Acropolis Germaniae* under the Nazis, but clever redesigning after the war left it with a less bombastic and still Classical appearance. Few visitors would associate the buildings here with the Nazi era, in stark contrast to what happened with the Party Rallying grounds in Nürnberg. The area houses several impressive museums to complement the nearby Pinakotheken.

At the north of the square is the Greek temple-like **Glyptothek**, Königsplatz 3, ☎ 089-286-100. This Ionic-columned

Glyptothek *(J. Wildgruber/FVAmuc)*

building was erected in 1816-30 to house one of Europe's largest collections of sculpture from antiquity. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 8 pm on Tuesday and Thursday. Admission is €3, free on Sunday.

On the south side of the square, with a Corinthian colonnade, is the **Antikensammlungen** (Antiquities Collection), Königsplatz 1, ☎ 089-598-359, www.antikensammlungen.de. It has an impressive collection of Greek ceramics, Etruscan art, small sculptures, bronzes, and jewelry. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 8 pm on Wednesday. Admission is €3, free on Sunday.

The **Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus und Kunstbau** (Municipal Gallery), Luisenstraße 33, ☎ 089-2333-2000, www.lenbachhaus.de, is in a Florentine-style villa constructed in the late-19th century for the artist Lenbach. A large part of the collection is by local painters or of regional objects. However, the Avant Garde Blaue Reiter collection is internationally famous. It includes works by Kandinsky, Marc, Kubin, Klee, and Jawlensky. The attached Kunstbau is actually a former subway platform and is used to house temporary exhibitions. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €6.

Olympiagelände & BMW

In the northern suburbs of Munich are the **Olympiagelände** (sites of the 1972 Summer Olympic Games). The 80,000-seat Olympic Stadium and the 14,000-seat multi-purpose Olympiahalle are frequently used for sports and cultural events, while the Olympic swimming pool is open to the general public. Of particular architectural note is the enormous glass tent that was constructed to cover the main stadiums and large public areas. It was fabulously expensive and over-budget but is now much loved. Twelve 81-m/265-ft pylons and 36 smaller ones keep the massive glass roof in the air. The 60-m/197-ft Olympiaberg (Olympic Mountain) was created by rubble carted out of Munich after World War II. Most of the Olympiagelände is unfenced and freely accessible. It is a favored place for jogging, cycling, and inline skating.

1972 Olympic Stadium *(Aerobild Luftbild/FVAmuc)*

The 290-m/950-ft **Olympiaturm** (Olympic Tower, 1968) is one of the highest television towers in Germany. At 190 m/623 ft is a revolving restaurant and a viewing platform that attracts up to 700,000 annual visitors. The views of Munich are fine – it really is too high to see much detail – but the views of the Bavarian Alps are fantastic when the weather is clear. The elevator costs €3 and operates from 9 am to midnight.

Adjacent to the Olympiagelände are the headquarters and a factory of Bayerischen Motoren Werken, better known by the acronym BMW. The headquarters are in a futuristic-looking silver building from the early 1970s. It looks as if four cylinders of 19 stories each are hanging from the support structure at the top. The **BMW-Museum**, Petuelring 130, ☎ 089-3822-3307, www.bmw.com, has an interesting exhibition of BMW cars, aircraft engines, and motorcycles, ranging from the 1928 Dixi to design studies. Factory tours are also possible – book well in advance for the limited number of English-language tours. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 5 pm. Admission is €3.

The area is easily reached from the Old Town on U-Bahn U3, station Olympia-Zentrum.

Schloss Nymphenburg

Schloss Nymphenburg was erected originally in 1664-74 as a small summer palace west of the city for the ruling family. However, Prince Elector Max Emmanuel turned it into a lavish Baroque palace. For most of the 18th century, his successors added more features and structures until Nymphenburg became the largest Baroque palace in Germany. The extensive garden was developed from 1700 onwards and eventually combined formal Italian and French elements with English landscape garden areas.

Schloss Nymphenburg is over half a mile long and can be visited without a tour. It is mostly Baroque and has a splendid interior. The huge banqueting hall has rich stuccowork and frescoes by Johann Baptist Zimmermann. Several royal apartments are on display, including the **Geburtzimmer** (Birth Room) of mad King Ludwig II. Of special note is the **Schönheitengalerie** (Gallery of Beauties) – a huge collection of paintings by Joseph Stieler of beautiful women that caught the roving eye of King Ludwig. Don't miss the painting of Lola Montez, the woman who cost him his throne.

The **Marstallmuseum mit Museum Nymphenburger Porzellan** (Carriage Museum with Porcelain Collection) is in the south wing of the palace. It includes the collection of lavish carriages of the Wittelsbach family. On the second floor is the porcelain collection, with some 1,200 items from the Alt Nymphenburg production, ranging from Rococo to Art Nouveau.

Schloss Nymphenburg *(Wilfried Hösl / FVAmuc)*

Of the several structures in the garden, **Amalienburg** is the most interesting. Originally conceived as a simple hunting lodge, Cuvilliés created a simple exterior but a magnificent Rococo interior (1739). This pleasure pavilion served as inspiration for many others that were created all over Europe during the 18th century. It has lavish kennels for the royal hunting dogs, a hall of mirrors rotunda, and a kitchen tiled in blue-and-white Delft.

Three other early-18th-century structures in the garden are open to the public. The **Badenburg** contained the first heated swimming pool since Roman times. The **Pagodenburg** has an elegant French exterior, but the interior is an exotic Asian teahouse. The **Magdalenenklause** is a folly of artificial ruins. It contains a chapel dedicated to Mary Magdalene.

Visitor's Information

Schloss Nymphenburg, Amalienburg, and the Marstallmuseum, with the Porcelain Collection, are open daily from April to mid-October, 9 am to 6 pm, and from mid-October to March, 10 am to 4 pm. The three Parkburgen (Badenburg, Pagodenburg, and Magdalenenklause) are only open during the summer season. Admission to the Schloss and Museum is €5 each and to the Parkburgen €2 each. A combination ticket for the Parkburgen and Amalienburg is €4 and to all buildings in the complex €10 in summer and €8 in winter.

Admission to the park itself is free and daily opening hours are long, if complex. From March to October, it opens at 6 am but closes at 6:30 pm in March, 7 pm in October, 8:30 pm in April and September, and 9:30 pm from May to August. From November to February, it opens at 6:30 am and closes at 6 pm, but 5:30 pm in December.

The contact details for all are Schloss Nymphenburg, Eingang 1, ☎ 089-179-080, www.schloesser.bayern.de.

The area is now firmly within the city boundaries and around six km/3½ miles west of the Old Town. It is easily reached by Tram 17 in 12 minutes from the Hauptbahnhof.

Farther Afield

Dachau

In 1933, on orders from Heinrich Himmler, the Nazis' first concentration camp was created at Dachau near Munich. Those incarcerated here were mostly political prisoners. Although gas chambers were built, they were not used and the camp remained primarily a slave labor camp. Up to liberation in 1945, 31,591 of the 206,000 prisoners died, mostly of malnutrition and disease. At liberation, the camp had just under 70,000 prisoners, of which about a third were Jews. A local priest, Rupert Mayer, who was interned here, was later declared a saint – see *Bürgersaal* for details.

Liberated Dachau camp prisoners cheer US troops

The whole camp area is now a memorial site to those who died here, as well as to those who suffered under the Nazi regime elsewhere. Many parts of the camp have been restored or rebuilt. In the main building is the **KZ-Gedenkstätte Dachau Museum** (Concentration Camp Memorial), Alte Römerstraße 75, 85221 Dachau, ☎ 08131-669-970. It has photos and information about the tragic and disturbing events. An English-language information video is shown at 11:30 am and 3:30 pm. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm. Admission is free. It is worth investing in the audio guide (€2.50) since signposting is limited.

To reach the camp from the Hauptbahnhof, take S-Bahn S2 in the direction of Petershausen to Dachau Station. From here, it is a 10-minute walk, or take Bus 724 or 726. The train ride takes just over 20 minutes, but waiting for the bus can easily increase the total journey time to 50 minutes.

Munich Walks/Radius Bikes, Arnulfstraße 3, ☎ 089-5502-9374, www.radius-munich.com, has up to three daily guided tours, except Mondays, from Munich to Dachau concentration camp.

Schleißheim

Schloss Schleißheim (Josef Wildgruber/FVAmuc)

Prince Elector Max Emmanuel, who built large parts of Schloss Nymphenburg, erected another magnificent Baroque palace north of Munich. **Neues Schloss Schleißheim** (New Palace) Max-Emanuel-Platz 1, ☎ 089-315-8720, www.schloesser.bayern.de, was to have been his Versailles. Debt and exile ruined his plans but one of the four planned wings of monumental proportions was eventually completed in 1719. The 335-m/1,100-ft-long building has a Late Baroque and Rococo interior, which is partly the work of Johann Baptist Zimmermann and Cosmas Damian Asam. The art gallery has a remarkable collection of European Baroque paintings, including three works by Rubens. Around 50 rooms on two floors are open to the public. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from April to September, 9 am to 6 pm, and October to March, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €4. Combination tickets with Schloss Lustheim are €5.

The **Hofgarten** (Royal Garden) at Neues Schloss Schleißheim is one of only two Baroque gardens in Germany that survived in an unaltered form. It is in a French style with formal geometric design. The basic structures were designed by 1684 and most of it was completed early in the 18th century. A center canal leads to the end of the garden where a Baroque folly, the late-17th-century hunting palace, Lustheim, is encircled by smaller canals. Side-canals run the full length of the garden at the width of the main building and come together in a half-circle behind Lustheim. The fountains are operational daily from April to mid-September, 10 am to 4 pm. The gardens are freely accessible year-round.

Schloss Lustheim currently houses the most important early-Meissen porcelain collection outside Saxony. Opening hours are the same as for the main palace. Admission is €3 or €5 when combined with the main palace.

The **Flugwerft Schleißheim** (Airport), Effnerstraße 18, ☎ 089-315-7140, is a branch of the Deutsches Museum in the north of Munich. It has historic aircraft and missiles on display. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 5 pm. Admission is €3.50 or €10 when combined with the main museum.

Schleißheim is best reached by private car or S-Bahn line S1 to Oberschleißheim. It is a 15-minute walk to the palaces and the Flugwerft.

Freising

Freising is 30 km/20 miles north of Munich along the Isar. The Anglo-Saxon missionary St Boniface founded a bishopric here in 739 that served as the spiritual home of Bavaria until secularization in 1803 saw the honor moved to the newly created Archbishopric of Munich and Freising. The town of 36,000 is a pleasant day-trip from Munich and its proximity to the airport also makes it an ideal overnight stop for late night arrivals and early morning departures.

Touristinformation, Marienplatz 7, 85354 Freising, ☎ 08161-54-122, www.freising.de.

Freising has very good transportation connections. Munich Hauptbahnhof can be reached on at least hourly trains in around half an hour, while S-Bahn S1 connections to Marienplatz take around 45 minutes. Landshut is less than 20 minutes and Regensburg just under an hour on at least hourly trains.

Munich International Airport is only four km/2½ miles away with further transportation options to Munich and other towns in Bavaria. Bus 635 run three times an hour to the airport in around 20 minutes.

Sightseeing

The Old Town is to the west of the Isar river and below the Domberg hill, which served as the Episcopal center.

The main sight is the white **Freisinger Dom** (Cathedral), formally the **Dom St Maria**

Freisinger Dom *(Violatan)*

and St Korbian. This twin-towered, five-nave Romanesque basilica was erected in the late 12th century but received Gothic vaulting around 1500. Inevitably, its interior received a Baroque makeover and that was by the Asam brothers in 1724. The painting on the main altar is a copy of a work by Rubens. (The original is now in the Alte Pinakothek in Munich.) The **Krypta** (crypt) kept much of its original Romanesque appearance and is the oldest in Germany. In addition to the grave of St Korbian, note the intricately carved columns, with the **Bestiensäule** (Column of Beasts) illustrating the fight between good and evil particularly noteworthy. The adjacent cloisters have marvelous frescos and stuccowork by Johann Baptist Zimmermann (1716). The **Bibliotheksaal** (Library Hall) is a Rococo work by Francois Cuvilliés. The **Benediktuskirche** (Benedict Church) kept most of its Gothic exterior but has some stuccowork by Zimmermann. The Dom, crypt, cloisters, and Benedict Church are open daily from 8 am to noon and 2 to 5 pm, closing at 6 in summer. The library is open only from mid-May to October on weekdays from 2 to 3 pm. Admission is free.

The former bishop's residence is now a conference and training center known as the **Kardinal-Döpfner-Haus**, Domberg 27, ☎ 08161-1810. It is often used for concerts and exhibitions. Visitors are welcome to peek in and especially to see the courtyard with the oldest Renaissance arcades north of the Alps.

The Classical building behind the residence houses the **Diözesanmuseum** (Diocesan Museum), Domberg 21, ☎ 08161-48-790, www.dioezesanmuseum-freising.de, with the largest ecclesiastical collection in Germany, second only to that of the Vatican. The art ranges from Romanesque to Rococo. The most valuable item is the Lukasbild, a 12th-century Byzantine icon in a silver Baroque altar. The museum also has some fine Baroque art, including works by Rubens, Tiepolo, and Zimmermann. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

It is worth strolling through the quaint Old Town too, although the sights here are decidedly less glamorous than those of the Episcopal hill. The **Stadtpfarrkirche** Georgskirche (Town Parish Church St George), Rindermarkt 10, ☎ 08161-480-860, is a Late Gothic hall church. The interior went from Gothic to Baroque to neo-Gothic and currently is modern. The lovely 84-m/275-ft-high Baroque tower can be ascended for fine views on Saturday from 2 to 5 pm, May to October. The rest of the church is open weekdays from 9 am to noon and 4 to 5 pm, Friday mornings only.

The former **Premonstratensian Klosterkirche St Peter und Paul** (Monastery Church), Ignaz-Günther-Straße 7, ☎ 08161-62-303, in Freising-Neustift, designed by Giovanni Antonio Viscardi, was rebuilt in the late 18th century following a fire in 1751. It has one of the finest

Rococo interiors in Bavaria with ceiling frescoes by Johann Baptist Zimmermann, sculptures by Ignaz Günther, and stuccowork by Franz Xaver Feichtmayr. Opening hours are daily from 8 am to noon and 2 to 6 pm. The church is around 1.6 km/one mile from the Old Town along the main route to Landshut.

Staatsbräuerei Weihenstephan

To the west of the town is the former Benedictine **Kloster Weihenstephan** (monastery). It was founded in 725 and produced beer from the early days. The current **Staatsbräuerei Weihenstephan** (National Brewery) has been in constant operation since at least 1040 and is thus considered the oldest brewery in the world. The current production facilities are ultramodern and can be seen on guided tours Monday to Thursday. Reservations are required at ☎ 08161-5360, www.brauerei-weihenstephan.de. The beer can be sampled in the local **Bräustüberl**, Weihenstephaner Berg 10, ☎ 08161-13-004, (€-€€) or any of the thousands of bars and restaurants in Bavaria that have Weihenstephan on tap.

Cultural Events

Munich has a very busy cultural calendar and offers everything from classical music to the latest pop stars. It is famous for its 50 theaters that perform works in all genres but, unfortunately for most foreign visitors, usually in German only.

Munich has three symphony orchestras and two opera houses. The **Bayerische Staatsoper** (Bavarian National Opera House) and **Bayerisches Staatsorchester** (Bavarian National Orchestra), www.staatsoper.de, are two of the oldest companies in Germany, with the orchestra founded in 1523. Mozart raved over their talent. The orchestra first performed several Wagner operas in Munich and Bayreuth. The **Münchner Philharmoniker** (Munich Philharmonic), www.muenchnerphilharmoniker.de, is just over a century old. With 16,000 subscribers, tickets are seldom available to outsiders. The symphony orchestra of the **Bayerischer Rundfunk** (Bavarian Radio), www.br-klassik.de, was founded in 1949 and has an international reputation for excellence.

A good source for tickets to all kinds of events is **München Ticket**, www.muenchen-ticket.de, ☎ 089-5481-8181. It has offices in the Rathaus next to the tourist information office, in the Gasteig, and in the Olympiapark at the Info-Pavillion. For the Bayerischen Staatsoper, reservations must be made at the Staatsoper, Max-Joseph-Platz 2, ☎ 089-2185-1920, www.staatsoper.de.

Festivals

Munich has a very busy festival calendar that includes many originally Catholic holidays as well as purely secular merriments. The two largest festivals are described in more detail below.

Fasching (in other areas called Karneval or Fastnacht) starts early in January and lasts about two months. Particularly popular is the dancing of the market women at the Viktualienmarkt. After two weeks of fasting, usually end of March, comes the **Starkbierzeit** (Strong Beer Period) during which all local breweries brew a particularly potent variety.

This is followed by the first **Dult** (see below), and in June the city's **Foundation Day**. In summer, several festivals are held, including film and open-air music festivals. Two further Dults are held at each end of Okotberfest, which is mostly in September. The year ends with the **Christkindlmarkt** (Christmas Market), held during Advent at several locations throughout the city.

Christkindlmarkt on the Marienplatz

(H.Gebhardt/FVAmuc)

Oktoberfest

Munich is world-famous for the largest festival in the world – the annual 16-day Oktoberfest. It is actually held mostly in September and ends the first Sunday in October. It all started as a celebration of

Oktoberfest Procession (www.bayern.by)

the wedding of Crown Prince Ludwig and Princess Therese of Saxony-Hildburghausen in 1810. It became an annual event and is now a firm part of Munich's cultural program. Every three years it is combined with an agricultural show, but the main attractions for the millions of visitors are the beer tents, rides, and other entertainment.

Annually, Oktoberfest attracts over six million visitors, who each consume at least a quart of beer plus wine and non-alcoholic beverages. Half a million chickens and a hundred oxen are slaughtered and consumed, together with 50,000 kg/110,000 lbs of fish and 200,000 pairs of pork sausages. Oktoberfest's contribution to Munich's economy is estimated at around a billion euros.

Children at Oktoberfest

Children are welcome at Munich's Oktoberfest! Around 10% of *Münchner* visiting Oktoberfest bring their children with them, while only 3% of foreign visitors do so. Rides are discounted for children between noon and 3 pm, while admissions are reduced on two special family days. Of course, Oktoberfest is no place for children, *Münchner* or foreign, later at night.

The festival is held at a special terrain, known as the Theresienwiese, about a 10-minute walk south of the Hauptbahnhof. The show grounds are usually open from around 10 am to midnight, with most drinking stopping at 10:30 pm. Beer tents close for new arrivals when full – on weekends that can be before noon! It is generally a good idea to leave before 10 pm for safety reasons and to avoid the crowds on public transportation. Finding accommodation in Munich during Oktoberfest is problematic – expect to pay top dollar for even the simplest hotel.

Auer Dult Festivals

Auer Dult, www.auerdult.de, is a traditional Munich folk festival dating back to 1310. It is a combination market, flea market, and entertainment festival that lasts for nine days. Almost everything is sold here, but it is particularly famous as the largest market in Europe for tableware, pots, and pans, although more people are drawn by the food, drink, and entertainment. Three *Dulten* are organized annually – end of April, end of July, and mid-October. The market stalls are generally open from 9 am to 8 pm. The market is held at Mariahilfplatz. There is no parking in the area but Bus 52 connects to Marienplatz and Tram 27 to Karlsplatz.

Auer Dult *(C. Tkaczyk/FVAmuc)*

Shopping

Munich is a pleasant city for shopping. The haute couture shops are in very stylish Maximilianstraße as well as in streets near the Residenz. The **Fünf Höfe** (Five Courtyards) is an ultramodern shopping complex that opened in 2003 a block north of the Frauenkirche. It is packed with upscale boutiques, restaurants and cafés. This is the place to see and be seen.The pedestrian zone, especially Neuhauser and Kaufingerstraße, has the larger department stores. The largest and most famous store in Munich is the **Herties** department store, which spreads over several blocks between Karlsplatz and the Hauptbahnhof.

Probably the most desired souvenir to take home from Munich is a BMW car. Residents of the US (other areas need not apply), who are buying a BMW made in Germany, can save, depending on the model, between $2,000 and $8,000 by taking personal delivery in Germany, rather than in the US. The car may be driven up to six months in Europe before being shipped to America. Insurance for the first 30 days is included. The car can be dropped off at several cities in Europe at the end of the vacation and then shipped by BMW and delivered in the USA through the normal channels. There is no catch or hidden costs, but do note that some options, often including radios, are only fitted once the car arrives in the US. Contact any BMW dealer in the US, or www.bmwusa.com, for details on the European Delivery Program. (Other German car companies have similar schemes, but presently none offer such huge savings.)

Adventures

On Foot

Town Walks

Munich Walking Tours, Discover Bavaria, Hochbrückenstraße, ☎ 089-2554-3987, www.mikesbiketours.com, conducts guided tours daily at 3:30 pm from mid-April to August. Participation is €9 for this three-hour walking tour that ends at the Hofbräuhaus, where Mike has a *Stammtisch*. Other tours, including Schloss Neuschwanstein and Dachau, are also available.

Munich Walks/Radius Bikes, Arnulfstraße 3, ☎ 089-5502-9374, www.radius-munich.com, has several guided tours of Munich and Dachau. A fascinating two-hour tour covers Hitler and the Nazi-period sights in Munich. It departs daily between April and October at 3 pm from the office at the Hauptbahnhof (near tracks 32-33).

Stattreisen München, Frauenlobstraße 24, ☎ 089-5440-4230, www.stattreisen-muenchen.de, has an interesting range of tours – often of a specialist nature, focusing on a particular event, person, or neighborhood. Tours are available throughout the year, but the schedule is busiest between April and October and over weekends.

Weisser Stadtvogel München, Utzschneiderstraße 4, ☎ 089-3846-4961, www.weisser-stadtvogel.de, has several thematic tours. The most frequent tours are of the Old Town, Schloss Nymphenburg, and the Pinakothek der Moderne.

On Wheels

By Bicycle

Munich is a relatively flat city with around 420 miles of dedicated cycling routes, making for easy and safe cycling.

Mike´s Bike Tours, Discover Bavaria, Hochbrückenstraße, ☎ 089-2554-3987, www.mikesbiketours.com, is a pleasant way to explore Munich. From March to mid-November, one to four tours are available daily. The standard four-hour tour costs €22 and the extended seven-hour tour (in June and July only) costs €33 – both prices include bicycle rental. Bicycle rental without a tour is also available.

Pedal-powered **rickshaw taxis** are available from the Marienplatz to many parts of the Old Town. Fares start at €3. They are operated by **Rikscha Mobil**, Oppenrieder Straße 28, ☎ 089-129-4808, www.rikscha-mobil.de.

Weisser Stadtvogel München, Utzschneiderstraße 4, ☎ 089-3846-4961, www.weisser-stadtvogel.de, arranges two-hour cycling tours of the Old Town on Sunday at 3 pm from April to October. The fare of €14 includes bicycle rental. Departure point is the Feldherrnhalle at Odeonsplatz.

Bicycles can be rented in the Hauptbahnhof from **Radius Tour and Bikes**, Arnulfstr. 3, ☎ 089-596-113; **Radeldiscount**, Benediktbeurerstr. 20-22, ☎ 089-724-2351; **Radsport Huber**, Friedrich-Eckard-Str. 56, ☎ 089-9393-0670; or **Spurwechsel**, Steinstr. 3, ☎ 089-692-4699.

By Inline Skating

Inline skating is very popular in Munich with many parks and the Isar River banks open to skaters. On Monday nights from May to August, **Münchner Bladenights** allow skating through the streets of Munich. It claims to be the biggest skating event in Europe. Information on routes is available from **Green City**, Klenzestraße 54, ☎ 089-8906-6833, www.muenchner-bladenight.de. The party starts at 7 pm, but the actual skating is from 9 to 10:30 pm.

By Tour Bus

Several companies operate traditional bus sightseeing tours of Munich and surrounding areas. Prices are from around €10 for one-hour tours.

Major operators include **Münchner Stadtrundfahrten**, Arnulfstrasse 8, ☎ 089-5502-8995, and **Yellow Cab**, Sendlinger-Tor-Platz 5, ☎ 089-2602-5183.

AutobusOberbayern, Heidemannstraße 220, ☎ 089-323-040, www.autobusoberbayern.de, operates city tours as well as day-trips to several destinations near Munich, including Rothenburg, Herrenchiemsee, Berchtesgaden, Salzburg, and Innsbruck. A particularly popular tour that departs daily at 8:30 am is to Schloss Neuschwanstein and Schloss Linderhof – using public transportation, it is virtually impossible to do both on the same day.

By Taxi

Taxi Guide München, Ganghoferstraße 63a, ☎ 089-3537-9808, www.taxi-guide-muenchen.de, uses taxis with drivers qualified as tour-guides. The price is around €70 for the first hour and €20 for each additional hour. A full-day tour for up to eight persons covering 180 miles, e.g. to Schloss Neuschwanstein or Berchtesgaden, costs just over €400.

By Horse-Drawn Carriage

Hans Holzmann, Kutscherei, Schwere-Reiter-Strasse 22, ☎ 089-180-608, operates the only horse-drawn carriage in Munich. Trips from half an hour to two hours are possible daily in the afternoon from the Chinesischer Turm in the heart of the Englischer Garten. Prices are from €31 per half-hour for four to five persons.

In Water

Munich has several public swimming pools. If you simply want to swim, enquire from your hotel about the nearest one, but two indoor complexes are special.

Müllersches Volksbad

The **Müllersches Volksbad**, Rosenheimer Straße 1, ☎ 01801-796-223, is Germany's loveliest Art Nouveau indoor swimming complex. It was erected in 1897-1901 and has stylistic elements reminiscent of Roman as well as Oriental baths. The main bath, originally reserved for men only, has high barrel vaulting, while the smaller bath in the cellar, originally for women, has a dome. Several smaller baths and saunas are available. Opening hours are daily from 7:30 am to 11 pm, closing at 5 pm on Monday. Admission starts at €3.30 (free on your birthday) but additional fees are charged for some of the facilities.

Olympia-Schwimmhalle

The **Olympia-Schwimmhalle**, Spiridon-Louis-Ring 21, ☎ 01801-796-223, is the pool complex that was used for the 1972 Olympics. It has numerous facilities, including saunas. Opening hours are daily from 7 am to 11 pm, but closed on Tuesday and Thursday between 5:15 and 8:30 pm. Admission starts at €3.50, but saunas are extra.

Where to Stay

Luxury Hotels & Restaurants

☞ **Tip:** See page 50 for hotel rate chart.

The **Hotel Bayerischer Hof** is a privately managed luxury grand hotel close to the Old Town and the Pinakotheken Museums. Rooms are rustic, nostalgic, or modern, but all are luxurious. The **Garden-Restaurant** (€€-€€€€), with terrace, serves Mediterranean cuisine. **Trader Vic's** (€€-€€€€) serves Polynesian and Caribbean food. The very pleasant **Palais Keller** (€€-€€€) is a traditional Bavarian beer cellar and offers local specialties. Promenadeplatz 2-6, 80333 München, ☎ 089-21-200, fax 089-212-0906, www.bayerischerhof.de. (€€€€)

Hotel Bayerischer Hof

Mandarin Oriental

The **Mandarin Oriental Hotel** is close to the Hofbräuhaus, just minutes from the Marienplatz. The hotel is luxurious, with large rooms. The 19th-century building was originally a ballroom but successfully converted to a hotel in 1989. The manager reportedly told a very famous British pop star, who demanded a discount, to stay elsewhere. The pool is on the roof and has fantastic views of the Old Town and Alps when weather allows. The dinner restaurant **Mark's** (€€€-€€€€) serves international and nouvelle cuisine. **Mark's Corner** (€€-€€€) is open for lunch only. Neuturmstraße 1, 80331 München, ☎ 089-290-980, fax 089-222-539, www.mandarinoriental.com. (€€€€)

Suite at the Königshof

The **Königshof Hotel** is between the Old Town and the Hauptbahnhof at the Stachus intersection. It is an establishment in the grand hotel tradition with luxurious, individually furnished rooms. The **Königshof Restaurant** (€€€-€€€€) is one of the best in Munich and serves nouvelle cuisine in opulent surroundings. Karlsplatz 25, 80335 München, ☎ 089-551-360, fax 089-5513-6113, www.koenigshof-muenchen.de. (€€€€)

The **Kempinski Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten** is on the Maximilianstraße close to the Opera. It is a grand hotel with a history dating back to the mid-19th century. Rooms combine traditional elements with modern comforts. The **Bistro Restaurant** (€€-€€€€) has views of the shoppers. It serves international and nouvelle cuisine. Maximilianstraße 17, 80331 München, ☎ 089-21-250, fax 089-2125-2000, www.kempinski.com. (€€€€)

Old Town Area

Olatzl Hotel

The **Platzl Hotel**, close to the Hofbräuhaus, has comfortable, individually furnished rooms. The ones facing the courtyard are particularly pleasant. The **Pfistermühle Restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves Bavarian specialties in a vaulted setting with an old-Munich atmosphere, though without the beer hall effects. Pfisterstraße 4, 80331 München, ☎ 089-237-030, fax 089-2370-3800, www.platzl.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Hotel Torbräu** is close to the Hofbräuhaus and within easy walking distance of the Deutsches Museum. The building dates back to the 15th century and claims to be the oldest hotel in Munich. Rooms are comfortably furnished and spacious. Tal 41, 80331 München, ☎ 089-242-430, fax 089-2423-4235, www.torbraeu.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The nearby **Concorde Hotel** is a modern, family-run option with comfortable, individually furnished rooms. The ones facing the courtyard are very quiet. Herrnstraße 38, 80539 München, ☎ 089-224-515, fax 089-228-3282, www.concorde-muenchen.de. (€€€)

Admiral Hotel

The **Admiral Hotel** is just a block from the Deutsches Museum. It is a small hotel with very comfortable, large rooms furnished in an English country-house style. Some rooms are quite large. Kohlstraße 9, 80469 München, ☎ 089-216-350, fax 089-293-674, www.hotel-admiral.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Domus Hotel** is close to the Maximilianstraße at the edge of the Old Town. It has comfortable, tastefully decorated rooms, many with balconies. St-Anna-Straße 31, 80538 München, ☎ 089-221-704, fax 089-228-5359. (€€€)

The **Mercure Altstadt Hotel** is two blocks from the pedestrian zone. It is a modern hotel with functionally furnished rooms. Hotterstraße 4, 80331 München, ☎ 089-232-590, fax 089-2325-9127, www.mercure.com. (€€-€€€)

Bedroom at Mercure Altstadt

The **Daniel Hotel** is conveniently located at the Stachus, with an entry to the underground right next to the hotel. Rooms are comfortable with modern furniture. Sonnenstraße 5, 80331 München, ☎ 089-548-240, fax 089-553-420, www.hotel-daniel.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Hotel Acanthus** is a small spot at the Sendlinger Tor. Rooms are either in English country-house style, with some antiques, or modern. All are comfortable and furnished to high standards. An der Hauptfeuerwache 14, 80331 München, ☎ 089-231-880, fax 089-260-7364, www.achanthushotel.de. (€€-€€€)

Hauptbahnhof Area

As with most other major cities in Germany, the area around the Hauptbahnhof is not particularly inviting. The red light district, sex shops, and video booths are all close by. The first three hotels listed here are all next to or directly across the road from the station and not in bad areas. The others are also close and in safe areas but a sex shop or two may be passed en route from the station.

The **Hotel Le Méridien** opened in 2002 across the road from the Hauptbahnhof. It is unashamedly modern with well-equipped, stylish rooms. **Le Potager Restaurant** (€€€) serves international cuisine with strong French influences. Bayerstraße 41, 80335 München, ☎ 089-24-220, fax 089-2422-1111, www.lemeridien.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Le Méridien

The **Excelsior Hotel** is a very comfortable hotel with a rustic-elegant décor. Rooms are very comfortable with country-style furniture. The **Geisel's Vinothek** (€-€€€) serves German and Italian food to complement the wine list of 400 labels. Schützenstraße 11, 80335 München, ☎ 089-551-370, fax 089-5513-7121, www.excelsior-muenchen.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Intercity Hotel** is part of the station building and has been in operation since the early 1950s. Rooms are modern, well equipped, and quiet. The room key gives free access to local transportation. Bayerstraße 10, 80335 München, ☎ 089-545-560, fax 089-5455-6610, www.intercity-hotel.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Hotel Drei Löwen** is a block from the station. It is a modern hotel with individually furnished rooms using currently fashionable wood furniture. A pleasant option at the price. Schillerstraße 8, 80336 München, ☎ 089-551-040, fax 089-5510-4905, www.hotel-3loewen.de. (€€-€€€)

HOTEL DREI LÖWEN
HOTEL DREI LÖWEN
Bayern-Boutique

Hotel Drei Löwen

The **King's Hotel First Class** and the **King's Hotel Center** are two modern hotels that use ample wood in the interior. All rooms have four-poster beds. The hotels are two blocks north of the Hauptbahnhof and close to the Glyptothek. King's Hotel First Class, Dachauer Straße 13, 80335 München, ☎ 089-551-870, fax 089-5518-7300, www.kingshotels.de. (€€€-€€€€). King's Hotel Center, Marsstraße 15, 80335 München, ☎ 089-515-530, fax 089-5155-3300, www.kingshotels.de. (€€-€€€€)

The **Apollo Hotel** is in a side-street close to the station. Rooms are pleasant, with mahogany furniture. The rooms in the back of the building are quieter. Mitterstraße 7, 80336 München, ☎ 089-539-531, fax 089-534-033, www.apollohotel.de. (€€-€€€)

Englischer Garten

The **Hilton München Park** opened for the 1972 Olympics and was completely renovated in 2000. It has large, luxurious rooms. The hotel is particularly popular for its location between the River Isar and the Englischer Garten – more or less at the height of the Chinese Pagoda. Am Tucherpark 7, 80538 München, ☎ 089-38-450, fax 089-3845-2588, www.hilton.com. (€€€€)

Schwabing

Schwabing is a very pleasant, lively neighborhood to stay in. It is within easy reach of all the sights.

The **Marriott** is a modern hotel but stylish in the grand tradition. Rooms are luxurious, well equipped, and typical Marriott, with floral prints. The **California Grill** (€€-€€€) serves international cuisine with strong American overtones. Berliner Straße 93, 80805 München, ☎ 089-360-020, fax 089-3600-2200, www.marriotthotels.com. (€€-€€€€)

Renaissance Hotel

Nearby is the **Renaissance Hotel** with smart, comfortable rooms. The **Bistro 47-47** (€€-€€€) serves Mediterranean cuisine. Theodor-Dombart-Straße 4, 80805 München, ☎ 089-360-990, fax 089-3609-6900, www.renaissanncehotels.com. (€€€)

The **Holiday Inn City Nord** is a typical business hotel with nice, functional rooms – many with balconies. The hotel is convenient to the Autobahn. Kistlerhofstraße 142, 81379 München, ☎ 089-780-020, fax 089-7800-2672, www.holiday-inn.com. (€€-€€€)

Four Points Hotel München Olympiapark

The **Four Points Hotel München Olympiapark** is in the middle of the Olympiapark and an ideal location when attending sporting or cultural events. Rooms are modern and functional. The **Bayern Stub'n** (€€) serves hearty local cuisine. Helene-Mayer-Ring 12, 80809 München, ☎ 089-357-510, fax 089-3575-1800, www.arabellasheraton.com. (€€-€€€€)

The **Hotel Cosmopolitan** is in the heart of Schwabing, a few minutes from the U-Bahn and Leopoldstraße. Rooms are modern, with designer furniture. Hohenzollernstraße 5, 80801 München, ☎ 089-383-810, fax 089-3838-1111, www.cosmopolitan-hotel.de. (€€€)

Hotel Cosmopolitan bedroom

The **Mercure Hotel München-Schwabing** is just north of the Münchner Freiheit close to the Englischer Garten. Rooms are modern and functionally furnished. Leopoldstraße 120, 80802 München, ☎ 089-389-9930, fax 089-349-344, www.mercure.com. (€€-€€€€)

Munich Airport/Freising

Munich Airport is around 30 km/20 miles north of the city. Good transportation links exist from downtown to the airport but it is still a good 45 minutes by rail, which helps to explain the large number of airport hotels in the vicinity. Brand-name hotels generally demand top dollar but rates drop fast to bargain-basement levels on a quiet night. The shuttle buses from the airport generally cost about €5 and taxis €15.

The **Kempinski Hotel Airport München** is in an ultramodern, glass-and-steel building right next to the airport terminals. It is a five-minute walk to the terminal or use the free shuttle bus. Rooms are large, stylish, and very luxurious. The public halls have fantastic views of the airport and aircraft. The large gym is complemented by a 17-m/56-ft-long swimming pool. The palms in the atrium are similarly 17 m/56 ft high. The **Charles Lindbergh** (€€) serves international cuisine. Terminalstraße/Mitte 20, 85356 München, ☎ 089-97-820, fax 089-9782-2610, www.kempinski.com. (€€€€)

Kempinski Hotel Airport

The **Dorint Novotel München Airport** is in the heart of Freising. It combines a 500-year-old guesthouse with a modern wing.

Rooms are pleasant and modern. The **Zur Alten Schiessstätte** (€€) serves local and international dishes. Dr.-v.-Daller-Str. 1-3, 85356 Freising, ☎ 08161-5320, fax 08161-532-100, www.accorhotels.com. (€€€-€€€€)

The **München Airport Marriott** is north of Freising's Old Town with views toward the Domberg. The hotel is modern and the rooms comfortable, with typical Marriott décor. The fitness center has saunas and a large indoor pool. The **Domberg** (€€) has international food. Alois-Steinecker-Straße 20, 85354 Freising, ☎ 08161-9660, fax 08161-966-6281, www.marriotthotels.com/mucfr. (€€-€€€€)

Another ultramodern hotel at the edge of Freising's Old Town but this time built and furnished according to Asian feng shui principles is the **Corbin Hotel**. Rooms are minimalist, very modern, and attractive. Wippenhauserstraße 7, 85354 Freising, ☎ 08161-88-690, fax 08161-886-9588, www.corbin-hotel.de. (€€-€€€)

Youth Hostels

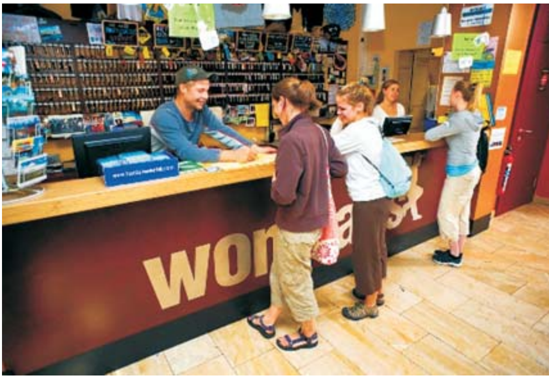
Munich has a large number of hostels. The first three operate according to the rules of the German Youth Hostel Organization (DJH) with its restrictions on persons over 27 years old and membership requirements. All the others listed are private and free of age restrictions and curfews. The private hostels are generally close to the Hauptbahnhof and offer free or very cheap Internet access.

The **DJH München-Neuhausen** is three km/1.8 miles to the west of the Old Town near Schloss Nymphenburg. It can be reached on U-Bahn U1, station Rotkreuzpark, in 10 minutes from the Hauptbahnhof. The hostel is closed in December. Wendl-Dietrich-Straße 20, 80634 München, ☎ 089-131-156, fax 089-167-8745.

DJH München-Neuhausen

The **DJH München-Thalkirchen** is south of the Old Town near the Tiergarten and a few minutes from beaches along the Isar. It can be reached in 10 minutes from the Marienplatz on U-Bahn line U3, station Thalkirchen (Tierpark). The hostel is closed for most of January. Miesingstr. 4, 81379 München, ☎ 089-723-6550, fax 089-724-2567.

The **DJH Dachau** is a very modern hostel in the town of Dachau. It can easily be reached from downtown Munich on S-Bahn S2. From the S-Bahn station, take Bus 720 or 726 to John-F-Kennedy-Platz. The hostel is usually closed from late November to mid-January. Roßwachtstr. 15, 85221 Dachau, ☎ 08131-322-950, fax 08131-322-9550.



Wombats

Three fine hostels are adjacent to each other in Senefelderstraße directly south of the Hauptbahnhof. The street is fairly quiet and the area safe even at night. Closest to the station is **Wombats Munich**. It is probably the most pleasant hostel in all of Munich. All rooms have their own bathrooms and free lockers. It was recently voted "cleanest hostel in the world." Senefelderstraße 1, 80336 Munich, ☎ 089-5998-9180, fax 089-599-891-810, www.wombats-hostels.com.

Adjacent is the well-managed **Jaeger's Hotel Hostel**. Accommodation here ranges from single rooms to 40-bed dorms. Senefelderstr. 3, 80336 Munich, ☎ 089-555-282, fax 089-592-598, www.jaegershostel.de.

Farther down the same street is **Euro Youth Hotel**. It apparently belongs to the Augustiner brewery, which helps to explain the cheap beer and party atmosphere. Senefelderstraße 5, 80336 München, ☎ 089-5990-8811, fax 089-5990-8877, www.euro-youth-hostel.de.

Just north of the Hauptbahnhof is **4 You München**, a hostel proud of its ecologically correct credentials. Accommodation ranges from hotel-like double rooms to 12-bed dorm rooms. All ages are welcome but those over 27 years old pay slightly more. Hirtenstraße 18, 80355 München, ☎ 089-552-1660, fax 089-5521-6666, www.the4you.de.

Haus International is in the pleasant suburb of Schwabing north of the Old Town. It can be reached on Tram 12 or Bus 53, stop Barbarastraße. Elisabethstrasse 87, 80797 München, ☎ 089-120-060, fax 089-1200-6630, www.haus-international.de.

Munich

Camping

München Thalkirchen Campingplatz is conveniently located only 2.4 miles from the Old Town in the Isar Valley. It can be reached in 15 minutes by public transportation. There is space for 300 tents and 250 RVs or mobile homes. It is open from mid-March to October. Zentralländstraße 49, 81379 München, ☎ 089-723-1707, fax 089-724-3177.

Campingplatz Nord-West is 1.2 miles from the Olympiagelände and convenient to both public transportation and *Autobahnen*. There are many shady spots and three lakes for swimming within half a mile. It is open year-round. Auf den Schrederwiesen 3, 80995 München, ☎ 089-150-6936, fax 089-1582-0463, www.campingplatz-nord-west.de.

Kapuzinerhölzl - The Tent has been in operation for 30 years. It is a campsite for tents only but is best known for its large communal tent for backpackers and youth groups. The location is in a park near Schloss Nymphenburg, but the Hauptbahnhof can be reached in 15 minutes by tram. Sleeping space in the big tent goes for around €10. It is open from June to August. In den Kirschen 30, 80992 München, ☎ 089-141-4300, fax 089-175-090, www.the-tent.com.

Where to Eat

☞ See price codes for restaurants on page 52.

The luxurious **Schuhbeck's in den Südtiroler Stuben**, Platzl 6-8, ☎ 089-216-6900, is a refined restaurant with partly wood-paneled walls and a Baroque ceiling. The food is first-class, with classical dishes and South Tyrolean specialties. (€€€-€€€€)

The nearby **Boettner's**, Pfisterstraße 9, ☎ 089-221-210, serves mostly classical dishes and nouvelle cuisine. It uses ample dark wood in its décor. Reservations are advisable. (€€€-€€€€)

Schuhbeck's

The **Halali**, Schönfeldstraße 22, ☎ 089-285-909, is a refined-rustic spot suited to the hunting tradition that its name recalls. It is located in between the Hofgarten and Englischer Garten. Food is classical international and regional dishes. Reservations are advisable. (€€€)

Hunsinger's Pacific, Maximiliansplatz 5 (enter from Max-Joseph-Straße), ☎ 089-5502-9741, is arguably the best-known fish restaurant in Munich. It serves a wide selection ranging from the standard to the exotic. The food is mostly international but with an Asian touch. Meat is also served. (€€-€€€)

The **Dallmayr Restaurant**, Dienerstraße 14, ☎ 089-213-5100, in the famous Delicatessen Shop Dallmayr, is at the heart of the Old Town at the Marienplatz. The prices reflect the quality of the food rather than a

Dallmayr

tourist markup for the location. The restaurant is opulent and has a wide selection ranging from international cuisine to local specialties. (€€€)

Lenbach, Ottostraße 6, ☎ 089-549-1300, is between Stachus and Maximiliansplatz. It is an enormous restaurant designed by British architect Sir Terrance Conran and with a modern, stylish interior. The food is mostly international and Asian, with a separate sushi bar. (€€-€€€)

The **Weinhaus Neuner** is a block from the Stachus in a mid-19th-century building, claiming to be the oldest wine bar in Munich. It has cross-vaulting and wall paintings. Food is regional cuisine and hearty local dishes. (€-€€)

Zum Alten Markt

Zum Alten Market

Zum Alten Markt, Dreifaltigkeitsplatz 3, ☎ 089-299-995, is a restaurant with wood paneling in a 400-year-old building at the Viktualienmarkt. It serves regional cuisine. (€-€€)

The **Ratskeller**, Marienplatz 8, ☎ 089-219-9890, is an enormous restaurant in the cellars of the historic Town Hall. It has many rooms, niches, and hidden corners in a romantic, rustic style. Food is local, with Franconian specialties. Reservations are essential. (€-€€)

Close to the Asmankirche is the very pleasant **Prinz Myshkin Restaurant**, Hackenstraße 2, ☎ 089-265-596, www.prinz-myshkin.com. This is the best vegetarian restaurant in town, though, granted, competition is limited. It's a modern restaurant in a large building with a vaulted ceiling. (€€-€€€)

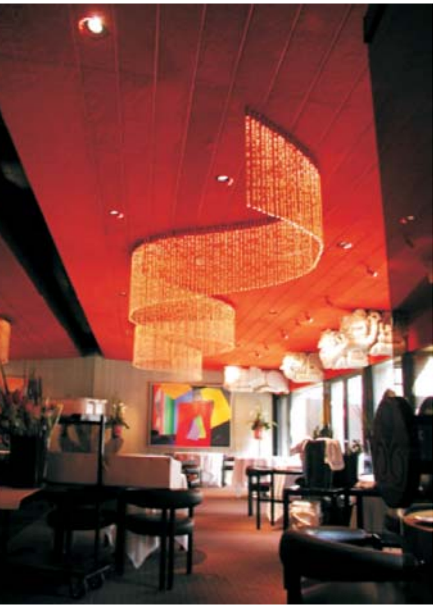
Another vegetarian option is the self-service **Buxs Restaurant**, Frauenstraße 9, ☎ 089-291-9550. It has published seven cookbooks thusfar and is a good place to stop for a quick bite in the Marienplatz vicinity. (€-€€)

Where to Eat in Schwabing

The **Restaurant Tantris**, Johann-Fichte-Straße 7, ☎ 089-361-9590, is considered by many to be the best in Munich. It serves classical dishes and nouvelle cuisine. The décor is Asian, with straight lines, black-and-red furniture, and mythical figures. (€€€€)

The **Olympiaturm-Drehrestaurant** (Olympic Tower Revolving Restaurant), Spiridon-Louis-Ring 7, ☎ 089-3066-8585, has the best views in town. An elevator zooms guests up to 182 m/600 ft. A complete revolution usually takes 53 minutes, although the speed can be adjusted to either 35 or 72 minutes as well. Reservations are recommended for dinner. (€€€-€€€)

Spago, Neureuther Straße 15, ☎ 089-271-2406, is a modern restaurant serving nouvelle cuisine with strong Italian overtones. It is popular with local actors and artists. (€€-€€€)



Tantris

Bistro Terrine, Amalienstraße 89, ☎ 089-281-780, is a popular French restaurant. Its décor has Art Nouveau and Art Deco elements. Reservations for dinner are recommended. (€€€)

Bistro Terrine

Cafés

Coffee and coffee houses came into fashion in Munich around the same times as in Vienna, i.e., after the defeat of the Turks at the gates of the Austrian capital during the 17th century. Traditional cafés often are closed on Sundays, but Sunday brunch is increasingly popular.

Café Arzmiller, Theatinerstraße 22, ☎ 089-294-273, is in an arcaded courtyard near the Theatinerkirche. The house specialty is strudel. (€-€€)

Across the square, is **Tambosi am Hofgarten**, Odeonsplatz 18, with benches on the square in addition to the old-style café itself. A fine place for breakfast or late-night cocktails. It was the first café in Munich that women were allowed to frequent without male company! (€-€€)

Café Luitpold Palmengarten, Brienner Straße 11, ☎ 089-292-865, serves around 300 types of cakes each year – the most famous is the chocolate-covered Luitpold Torte. The inner courtyard is glass-domed with palm trees. There are terraces on Maximilianplatz and Brienner Street. (€€)

Conditorei-Café Hag Rottenhöfer, Residenzstraße 25, ☎ 089-222-915, www.rottenhoefer.de, was Bavarian court confessionary supplier and it has not lost its touch despite the demise of the monarchy. (€-€€)

It is hard to get a table at **Café Glockenspiel**, Marienplatz 28, ☎ 089-264-256, as this is one of the best places for watching the Glockenspiel and life in general passing by on Munich's main square. The food is mostly Mediterranean. (€-€€)

A pleasant alternative is **Café Rischart**, Marienplatz 18, ☎ 089-231-7000. Food served changes according to the season. (€-€€)

Café Kreuzkamm, Maffeistraße 4, ☎ 089-293-277, moved to Munich from Dresden following World War II. It still serves some Saxon specialties including Dresdner Stollen (Christmas cake). (€-€€)

Beer Halls & Beer Gardens

BEER GARDEN ETIQUETTE

Munich is inevitably associated with beer and has several beer gardens and beer halls popular with locals and visitors alike.

Beer is usually served by *Mass* (one liter) or, if requested, by *Halb* (half-liter). Ordering anything smaller will raise eyebrows. Colas are available in some beer gardens, but non-drinkers will not be sniggered at when asking for an *Apfelschaftschorle* – apple juice and soda water mix. It is much healthier and more refreshing than cola. A *Radler* (literally "cyclist") is half-beer, half-lemonade.

The typical food in beer gardens is large, soft pretzels and sausages in all forms, served with potatoes and sauerkraut.

Augustiner Biergarten *(T. Höpker/FVAmuc)*

A Munich favorite is *Weißwurst* (white sausage). It is traditionally only served in the morning and correct etiquette is not to eat the skin and to eat it by hand. It goes well with sweet Bavarian mustard and, of course, beer. Payment is usually due at delivery. In most beer gardens, it is permissable to bring your own food, but never your own drink.

It is common to share tables with strangers in busy restaurants; beer gardens with their long tables and bench seats are no exception. Simply ask if there is free space – *Platz frei?* However, never sit down at a *Stammtisch* even if it is completely empty. This is a table reserved for members of a society or group and sitting there is by membership or invitation only.

The best-known building in Munich is the **Hofbräuhaus**, Platzl 6, ☎ 089-290-1360, www.hofbraeuhaus.de. Its best features are also the worst – its international fame and popularity. It can be packed at night with international visitors, who think getting hopelessly drunk and singing out of tune is the German idea of having a good time. It can also be packed with locals and visitors having a good time – it is often simply a case of good or bad luck on the day. You may prefer reserving a table at the more formal restaurants on the upper levels, or visit for lunch. An oompah band usually plays at all hours. (€-€€€)

The **Augustiner Gaststätten**, Neuhauser Straße 27, ☎ 089-2318-3257, is probably the most famous beer hall in Munich after the Hofbräuhaus. Augustiner beer was brewed here up to 1885. Parts of the building are Art Nouveau, and the beer garden is particularly pleasant. (€-€€)

The **Paulaner im Tal**, Tal 12, ☎ 089-219-9400, is a nostalgic restaurant with terrace and beer garden serving local cuisine with a reasonable vegetarian selection and some Austrian dishes. (€-€€)

The **Löwenbräukeller**, Nymphenburger Straße 2, ☎ 089-526-021, is close to the Hauptbahnhof and next to the brewery itself. It has a rustic locale and pleasant beer garden. The food is unapologetically

Bavarian. It tends to draw fewer foreign tourists than the breweries in the Old Town area. (€-€€)

Zum Franziskaner, Perusastraße 5, ☎ 089-231-8120, is a pleasant rustic restaurant with large beer garden. The cuisine is international with regional specialties. (€-€€€)

The nearby **Spatenhaus and der Oper**, Residenzstraße 12, ☎ 089-290-7060, is a quieter, slightly upscale locale in a century-old building. It has various rooms and serves hearty local cuisine. (€€-€€€)

The **Weisses Bräuhaus**, Tal 7, ☎ 089-290-1380, serves regional cuisine in a building dating from the early 20th century. (€-€€€)

The **Bratwurstherzl**, Dreifältigkeitsplatz 1, ☎ 089-295-113, is a traditional bratwurst restaurant at the Viktualienmarkt with self-made sausages grilled over beech-wood fires. (€-€€)

A very pleasant similar establishment is the **Nürnberger Bratwurst Glöckl am Dom**, Frauenplatz 9, ☎ 089-295-264. It serves Nürnberger Bratwurst (finger-sized grilled sausages) and Bavarian cuisine. Ask for cola and you will receive the server's assurance, with a pained face, that no cola has ever fouled this fine establishment. (€-€€)

The second-largest beer garden in Munich is at the **Chinesischer Turm** (Chinese Pagoda) in the Englischer Garten. It seats about 6,000 people! You can bring your own food, but not drinks! Several other smaller beer gardens are scattered through the park.

Biergarten Chinesischer Turm (*P. Scarlandis/FVAmuc*)

Oberbayern/Upper Bavaria

Oberbayern (Upper Bavaria) is the most popular tourist region in Bavaria, even if its most popular attraction, Munich, is excluded. For many, this is what Bavaria is all about: rolling hills with Alpine peaks on the southern horizon, lakes with crystal-clear water, Baroque churches and monasteries, King Ludwig's fantasy castles, picture-perfect towns where old traditions are preserved, beer, lederhosen and, of course, the Alps themselves. Although the skies are not always blue, the area south of Munich is pure vacationland.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Fünfseenland 108
- Zugspitz Region 123
  - Garmisch-Partenkirchen 124
  - Murnau on the Staffelsee 130
- Upper Bavaria South of Munich 147
  - Kochelsee 148
  - Tegernsee-Schliersee-Wendelstein 155
- Eastern Upper Bavaria 167
  - The Inn Valley 168
  - Chiemsee 180
- Berchtesgadener Land 192
  - Bad Reichenhall 193
  - Berchtesgaden 194
  - Obersalzberg 195
  - Königsee 196
  - Ramsau 198

Fünfseenland (Five Lakes Country) is just minutes from Munich and very popular, especially with day-trippers from the capital. The two main lakes, the Starnberger See and Ammersee, are the main draw, while Kloster Andechs and the Buchheim Museum (Expressionist art) provide cultural attractions.

The **Zugspitz region** has Germany's highest mountain as well Garmisch-Partenkirchen, the most popular ski resort.

Facing page: Garmisch-Partenkirchen

Oberammergau and Mittenwald are postcard-perfect towns, while Kloster Ettal and the Wieskirche are major Bavarian Baroque masterpieces. Schloss Linderhof is the only one of King Ludwig's fantasy castles that was ever completed.

The area directly **south of Munich** has numerous lakes, such as the Kochelsee, Tegernsee, and Schliersee. Cultural attractions include the Franz Marc Museum, Benediktbeuren Monastery, an open-air museum in Glentleiten, and numerous Baroque churches.

Eastern Upper Bavaria offers the lovely **Inn Valley** with the historic town of Wasserburg, the pilgrims' town of Altötting, and Burghausen, with the longest castle in Europe. The **Chiemsee** is Bavaria's largest lake and is popular with watersports enthusiasts. But it's mainly visited for King Ludwig's wonderful Versailles-copy Schloss Herrenchiemsee on a small island in the lake.

Berchtesgadener Land is the most beautiful part of Germany. Berchtesgaden is surrounded by mountains and is an outdoor enthusiast's heaven during all seasons. The **Königsee** is Bavaria's cleanest and arguably most beautiful lake. The holiday retreats of major Nazi leaders have been destroyed but the Eagles' Nest and some underground bunkers are worth seeing.

THE GERMAN ALPINE ROAD

The **Deutsche Alpenstraße** (German Alpine Road), Nördliche Haupstraße 1-3, 83700 Rottach-Egern, ☎ 08022-927-370, www.german-alpine-road.de, undoubtedly has the most beautiful natural surroundings of any German tourist route. It is over 450 km/280 miles and runs from Lindau on the Bodensee via, among others, Füssen, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Bad Tölz, and Tegernsee, before ending at Berchtesgaden near Salzburg. It follows the Alps closely and passes 25 castles and palaces, 21 mountain lakes, 64 health resorts, and beautiful panoramas too many to count. Several shortcuts, including through Austria, can make the route quicker if necessary. From May to October, a weeklong guided bus tour of the route (and Munich) can be booked. The **Bodensee-Königsee Cycling Route**, www.bodensee-koenigssee-radweg.de, follows a slightly more direct route of 410 km/255 miles that is usually done in a week or more. Although it goes through the hills to the north of the Alps, some stretches are challenging, with long inclines.

Fünfseenland (Five Lakes Country)

The Fünfseenland (Five Lakes Country) is Munich's playground. Located southwest of the city, it can easily be reached by S-Bahn in

Ammersee: Kloster Andechs *(Tourismusverband Starnberger Fünf-Seen-Land)*

half an hour and even faster by car. It is a beautiful region with forests, rivers, meadows, views of the Alps and, of course, lakes. There are actually dozens of them, but for most foreign visitors only two are of significance, the Ammer and Starnberg lakes.

The **Starnberger See** (Lake Starnberg) is, after the Chiemsee, the largest lake in Bavaria. It is 21 km/13 miles long, between two and five km/1.2 to 3.1 miles wide, and up to 128 m/420 ft deep. Its circumference is 50 km/31 miles, of which just over half is freely accessible – the rest is in private hands and is jealously guarded. Water quality is very good and the summer temperature can reach 24°C/75°F.

The Starnberger See has been a popular urban retreat since the 17th century. In 1663, Elector Ferdinand Maria took 500 guests on a huge rowboat with 100 oarsmen for lavish parties on the lake. The nobility built palaces on its shore and it was soon known as the Princes' Lake. From the mid-19th century, rail access began to bring in the masses. Although the prime properties are still preserves of the rich and famous – the Wittelsbachs still own a few properties here – most visitors are day-trippers from Munich.

The **Ammersee** (Ammer Lake) is the third-largest natural lake in Bavaria. It is 16 km/10 miles long, between three and five km/1.9 to 3.1 miles wide, and up to 82 m/270 ft deep. Its circumference is 42 km/26 miles. Water quality is very good and the summer temperature can reach 25°C/77°F.

Although it is only around 15 minutes farther from Munich using modern transportation, the distance was simply too far for the nobility in previous centuries. As a result, it has long been known as the Peasants' Lake. Even now, it has a more rural, less cosmopolitan feel than the Starnberger See. Many prefer it for exactly this reason and it can be as crowded on a summer weekend as its larger neighbor.

The natural beauty of the lake area is a major attraction, with numerous watersports, hiking, and cycling opportunities. Boats cruise on the lake in summer. The single most popular attraction is the **Andechs Monastery** – art, religion, and excellent beer draw 1½ million annual visitors. The Starnberger See has several sights associated with King Ludwig II (including Berg, where he drowned) and Austrian Empress Sisi who grew up next to the lake and spent numerous summers as an adult here too. Artists have long favored the lakes and, in addition to the working studios and Rococo churches, **Bernried** has a fantastic museum on Expressionist art.

Information Sources

Tourist-Information Starnberger Fünf-Seen-Land, Wittelsbacherstraße 2c, 82319 Starnberg, ☎ 08151-90-600, fax 098151-906-090, www.sta5.de, has information on the whole region as well as nearby towns, which are actually in Pfaffenwinkel. More information on Pfaffenwinkel, which is also partly described in the section on the Southern Romantic Road, is available from **Tourismusverband Pfaffenwinkel**, Postfach 1247, 86952 Schongau, ☎ 08861-7773, fax 08861-200-678, www.pfaffenwinkel.de.

Getting Around

Some *Münchner* can reach the lakes in less than 15 minutes by rail or car, but from the Hauptbahnhof it takes 30 minutes to Starnberg and 45 minutes to the Ammersee. S-Bahn S6 stops on the west bank of the Starnbergsee in Starnberg, Pöcking/Possenhofen, Feldafing, and Tützing, from where the regular railways continue to Seeshaupt and Kochel. The terminus of S-Bahn S5 is in Herrsching, near Andechs on the east coast of the Ammersee. The regional trains from Augsburg to Weilheim stop at Dießen and several other towns on the west bank of the Ammersee.

All towns and sights can easily be reached by car but in season and on weekends parking is a major problem, as are traffic jams. From

Munich, use the Autobahn A95 to Starnberg or the A96 to the Ammersee.

Sightseeing

Starnberger See

Starnberg

Starnberg, a town of 22,000, is the largest on the lake. The Wittelsbachs took control of a castle in town during the mid-13th century and converted it to a palace and summer residence during the 15th and 16th centuries. Elector Ferdinand Maria's hunting and boating parties were legendary. However, interest in the lake and town waned until the arrival of the railways and boating in the mid-19th century.

Starnberg is frankly not the most interesting or beautiful town in the region – it has several architectural eyesores from the 1960s and '70s. However, there are excellent transportation links and tourist facilities, including fine lakeside cafés. It has two stops on the S-Bahn – use Bahnhof See, not Bahnhof Nord.

Starnberger See

The **Heimatmuseum** (Local History Museum), Possenhofener Straße 5, ☎ 08151-772-132, is entered directly from Bahnhofplatz to the west of the station. It is in a 16th-century wooden farmhouse and illustrates life, art, and history of the region. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to noon and 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

The **Starnberger Schloss** (Palace), Schlossbergstraße, dates from the mid-16th century. It now houses the tax office and is not generally opened to the public. The nearby **Pfarrkirche St Joseph** (Parish Church) has a Rococo interior well worth seeing, with the main altar by Ignaz Günther.

Berg

The small town of Berg entered history as the place where Fairy Tale King Ludwig II spent his final few days. A cross in the lake marks the spot where King Ludwig II and his doctor where found drowned on June 13, 1886. Nearby is the Votivkapelle, a rather pompous neo-Romanesque chapel that was erected by Prince Regent Luitpold in memory of Ludwig II. (For more on Ludwig II see *Schwangau* in the *Allgäu* chapter.)

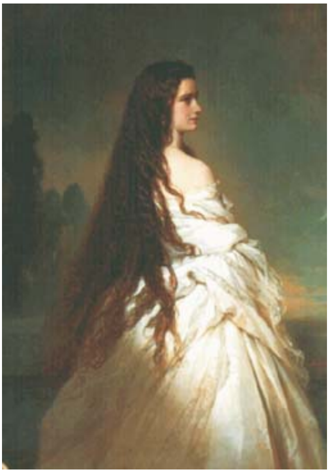
Berg has three palaces, but all are in private hands and off-limits to visitors. The park of Schloss Berg, which still belongs to the Wittelsbachs, is freely accessible.

West Bank

■ Pöcking & Possenhofen

Pöcking is best known for **Schloss Possenhofen**, the palace where Empress Elisabeth of Austria (1837-1898), better known as Sisi, spent most of her youth. The palace is now divided into luxury apartments and can only be seen from the outside. However, most of the **Schlosspark** (Palace Park) belongs to the City of Munich and is freely accessible to all.

EMPRESS SISI



Duchess Elisabeth Amalie Eugenie in Bavaria (1837-1898), better known as Sisi, was the cousin of Bavarian King Ludwig II. Two days after meeting Austrian Emperor Franz Joseph in 1853, they became engaged and were soon married. Sisi was a beautiful woman preoccupied with fitness, her figure, and looks. After a carefree youth in Bavaria, she never seemed to fit in with the strict protocol of the Viennese court and increasingly lived a separate life from her husband. She suffered several personal tragedies, including the death of a daughter aged two and the suicide of her only son, Crown Prince Rudolph. In her later years, she increasingly traveled alone, until she was killed in Geneva by an anarchist. A personality cult soon followed and was reinforced by three hugely successful Sisi movies made in German with Romy Schneider in the lead role. This 1950s trilogy, distributed in English as *Forever my Love*, severely romanticized Sisi and is helped keep the Sisi cult alive in both Bavaria and Austria.

■ Feldaffing & Roseninsel

Empress Elisabeth of Austria grew up in nearby Possenhofen but spent 24 consecutive summers from 1870 to 1894 in what is now the **Hotel Kaiserin Elisabeth** in Feldaffing. She frequently met her cousin, Bavarian King Ludwig II, on what is the area's main attraction, the **Roseninsel** (Rose Island). In 1854, King Maximillian II erected the **Casino**, ☎ 08157-4949, a Pompeian-style villa and park on the island. It can only be seen on a guided tour, from May to mid-October, Tuesday to Sunday noon to 5 pm. Admission is €3. A small museum, it focuses on the history of the island, which has been inhabited for at least 3,000 years, it is open gratis from noon to 5. The island can be reached by punt. In summer, occasional open-air concerts are held on the island.

■ Tutzing

The name Tutzing comes from Tozzi and Tuzzo, who were early Bavarian noble families from the Huosi. Although the town was first mentioned in 742, it remained a relatively unimportant fishing community up to the 19th century. However, from the mid-19th century tourism has been important, enhanced by the town being the terminus of the S-Bahn S6 from Munich and regional trains to the south. One of the loveliest hikes in the region is from Tutzing to the 728-m/2,388-ft Ilkahöhe.

■ Bernried

The small town of Bernried is five km/3.1 miles south of the Tutzing. It has a pleasant Old Town with numerous early wooden houses and lovely views of the lake. The **Bernrieder Park** was donated to the public by Wilhelmina Busch-Wood from the American Annhäuser-Busch brewing dynasty. The former **Klosterkirche St Martin** (Monastery Church) has a tower designed by Kaspar Feichtmayr. The Benedictines now have a mission in the small part of the former Augustine monastery that survived secularization in 1803.

The main sight in town and a popular excursion destination is the **Buchheim Museum**, Am Hirschgarten 1, 82347 Bernried, ☎ 08158-99-700, www.buchheimmuseum.de, also referred to as the **Museum der Phantasie**. It is in a modern building on the banks of the lake slightly north of town and contains the private collection of author Lothar-Günther Buchheim, best known for the book filmed as *Das Boot*. The main focal point is the world-class collection of Expressionist art, including numerous works of *Die Brücke* (The Bridge) pre-World War I art movement. The museum also has traditional art from all over the world as well as some works by Buchheim himself. Works are frequently rotated and enhanced by special exhibitions. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 6 pm from April to October. Admission is €8.50.

Bernried can be reached by bus or rail from Tutzing. An alternative is by boat to Bernried – special combination tickets including museum entry and a direct boat from and to Starnberg are available three times per day from April to October for €16.

Kloster Schäftlarn and Isar River *(Dirk Strittmatter)*

Farther Afield

About 10 km/six miles east of Starnberg, in the Isar Valley, is the **Kloster Schäftlarn** (Abbey), 82067 Kloster Schäftlarn, ☎ 08178-3435, www.abtei-schaeftlarn.de. This Benedictine monastery founded in 762 was one of the first in Bavaria. From 1140 until secularization in 1803, the monastery belonged to the Premonstratensian Order. In 1866, Ludwig II restored it to the Benedictine Order, which still runs a school here. The monastery was destroyed during the Thirty Years' War but rebuilt during the early to mid-18th century. The monastery buildings were designed by Giovanni Antonio Viscardi but the real treasure is the **Klosterkirche St Denis** (Abbey Church). It was designed by François de Cuvilliés but ultimately finished in 1760 by Johann Georg Gunetzrhainer and Johann Michael Fischer. The stuccowork and frescoes are the last large projects of Johann Baptist Zimmermann, while the main altars are by Johann Baptist Straub. The church is one of the most important Bavarian Rococo works. The formal Prälatengarten (Prelate's Garden) is worth seeing too. A pleasant tavern and a beer garden are open daily.

The monastery is a 15-minute hike from the Ebenhausen station on the S-Bahn line S7 from Munich to Wolfrathshausen. If driving from Munich or Starnberg on the Autobahn A95, use exit 5, Schäftlarn.

TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN

FREIZEITPARK
Märchenwald

If traveling with children on the Autobahn A95 from Munich to Garmisch-Partenkirchen, a pleasant stop is at the **Freizeitpark Märchenwald im Isartal** (Fairytale Park in the Isar Valley), Kräuterstraße 39, 82515 Wolfratshausen, ☎ 08171-18-760, www.maerchenwald-isartal.de. It is five km/3.1 miles inland from the Starnberger See. The park has around 50 models of famous fairytales as well as a few simple rides. Opening hours are daily April to mid-October from 9 am to 6 pm. Admission is €10.25 and includes all shows and unlimited rides. (Rides do not operate before 10 am or between noon and 1 pm.)

Ammersee

Andechs & Herrsching

Herrsching, with just over 10,000 inhabitants, is the largest town on the Ammersee and also the most visited due to its S-Bahn (S5) station. The town itself is not particularly interesting; the main destination for most visitors is the Andechs Monastery in the hills above the town.

Kloster Andechs, Bergstraße 2, 82346 Andechs, ☎ 08152-3760, www.andechs.de, is on a 711-m/2,333-ft hill, known as the Heilige Berg (Holy Mount) four km/2½ miles inland from Herrsching. It annually attracts up to 1½ million visitors and is best avoided on summer weekends. Although Andechs has been a center of religious activity since at least the 10th century, the Benedictine monastery was founded formally in 1455 by Duke Albrecht III. Beer brewing started in the same year. The monastery was secularized in 1803 but half a century later, the Benedictines were allowed to return.

Culturally the most important sight in the complex is the **Wallfahrtkirche** (Pilgrim Church) – its octagonal tower can be seen

Kloster Andechs interior *(Chris73)*

from afar. Its core is Gothic but the interior is mid-18th century Rococo. The awesome stuccowork, frescoes, and high altar are mostly the work of Johann Baptist Zimmermann. Johann Baptist Straub did most of the sculptures. The **Andechser Treasure**, with a claimed victory cross of Charlemagne and relics brought back by the crusaders, is kept in the Heilige Kapelle. In the Wachsgewolbe is Europe's largest collection of votive candles. It has around 250 candles from the past four centuries – these can only be seen daily between 2 and 3 pm. The church is generally open from 7 am to 7 pm.

Just as famous and arguably even more popular are the *Andechser Biere* (Andechs beers), which are sold all over Germany and Europe, but they taste best where they were brewed. Guided tours of the **Klosterbrauerei** (Monastery Brewery) are at 11 am on Tuesday and Wednesday from early May to mid-October. Admission is €3. Two very pleasant restaurants, where the beer can be sampled, are run by the monastery. The **Andechser Bierprobe** includes a sample of all six beers.

The **Kräutergarten** (Herb Garden) is freely open to visitors but note that some plants here are poisonous.

Andechs is best approached on foot from Herrsching. The four-km/2½-km walk takes just over an hour and goes through the romantic, if at times steep, Kiental Valley. The route is well marked from the boat landing and S-Bahn station. Unfortunately, you are unlikely to walk alone.

Andechs can also be reached by bicycle from Starnberg (20 km/12½ miles). RVO Bus 951 runs around three times per day from Starnberg to Andechs, while at least 10 buses go to Herrsching.

Dießen

On the west bank of the lake, this is a town of 10,000. It has long been popular with artists and still has a huge number of working studios.

The musician Carl Orff lived in town for almost 30 years. It also has an important Rococo church.

Tourist Office

Tourist Information, Schützenstraße 9, 86911 Dießen am Ammersee, ☎ 08807-1048, www.diessen.net.

Sights

An Augustinian monastery was founded at Dießen in 1132 and to a large extent determined how the area would develop up until secularization in 1803. The former monastery church, the **Marienmünster** (Minster St Mary), Klosterhof, ☎ 08807-948-940, is an excellent example of Bavarian Rococo. It received its present appearance in 1739 after the local abbot had a lesser church replaced with something more to his tastes. It is possible to see the work of almost every Rococo talent in this single church. Builder master Johann Michael Fischer designed the church, Francois Cuvilliés did the main altar, the ceiling frescoes are by Johann Georg Bergmüller, some statues are by Johann Baptist Straub, while the stuccowork is mostly by the Feichtmayr brothers. Furthermore, some altar paintings are by Tiepolo and Pittoni. The church is open daily from 8 am to noon and 2 to 6 pm.

CARL ORFF (1895-1982)

Carl Orff, born in Munich, is one of few Bavarian-born composers to have achieved world fame. His best-known work is *Carmina Burana* (see *Benediktbeuren*), used in numerous films and advertisements worldwide. He composed many other works and made a huge contribution to music education. He lived the last 27 years of his life in Dießen and is buried in the Schmerzhafte Kapelle in Andechs.

Nearby is the small **Carl Orff-Museum**, Hofmark 3, ☎ 08807-91-981, www.orff.de, dedicated to the life and work of Carl Orff. (Orff lived at Ziegelstadl 1 in Deißen-St Georg in a house not open to the public.) The museum is open weekends from 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

Cultural Events

The **Starnberger Musiktage**, www.rudensturku.com, is held annually during the first half of April. In addition to famous artists, it also has special courses and concerts to nurture young talent.

In summer, a few open-air concerts are held on the **Roseninsel** in Feldafing.

The **Wallfahrtkirche in Andechs**, ☎ 08152-376-350, www.andechs.de, is frequently used for organ concerts. From June to late September, free half-hour concerts are held on most Sundays at 4 pm.

Orff in Andechs, ☎ 08152-367-400, www.orff-in-andechs.de, is a concert series of Orff music performed in the monastery from June to August. *Carmina Burana* is a standard feature.

Concerts are occasionally held in the **Marienmünster in Dießen**, www.diemuensterkonzerte.de. Organ matinées are held once or twice a month on Sundays between May and September.

Schäftlarner Konzerte (concerts) are held during summer in **Abbey Church in Schäftlarn**, ☎ 08178-3435, www.schaeftlarner-konzerte.de. Symphonies by Mozart and Haydn are perennial favorites.

Festivals

The largest **Ritterturnier** (Knights' Tournament) in Europe is held annually on four weekends in July at **Schloss Kaltenberg**, Schlossstraße 8, 82269 Kaltenberg, ☎ 01805-113-313, www.ritterturnier.de. The tournaments are held in the 13th-century castle owned by Prince Luitpold, great grandson of the last Bavarian king. Kaltenberg is 10 km/six miles northwest of the Ammersee and can be reached on the S8 from Munich to Geltendorf, where a shuttle bus is available to the castle. By car, follow the Autobahn A95 from Munich or Landsberg and use exit 28, Windach/Geltendorf.

Shopping

Both lakes have been popular with artists from the late 19th century onwards. Dießen on the Ammersee has a huge number of working studios in a range of media. Details of studios open to visitors are available from the tourist office. The local art society also has special exhibition and a sales office at **Pavillon am See**, Seestraße 30, Dießen, ☎ 08807-8400.

Adventures

On Foot

Town Walks

The tourist office in **Starnberg** conducts guided town walks from May to October on Sunday and every second and fourth Wednesday of the month at 3 pm.

Countryside Hikes

Numerous hikes go through the hills and forest as well as close to the banks of the two lakes. The hikes around the Ammersee and Starnberger See are about 50 km/31 miles each. They can be done in around 12 hours but most people prefer shorter stretches. The less populated eastern shore of the Starnberger See is the more pleasant and closer to nature. Along the Ammersee, the western shore is preferred as it is mostly on dedicated trails next to the lake.

A popular hike is from Herrsching's S-Bahn station and boat landing to **Kloster Andechs**. The four-km/2½-mile hike takes an hour and goes through the steep but beautiful Kiental Valley. Andechs can also be approached on foot from Starnberg – the hiking route via the Maisinger See is 13 km/eight miles.

A popular long-distance hiking trail is the 120-km/75-mile **König Ludwig Weg** (King Ludwig Route), www.koenig-ludwig-weg.de, from Füssen to Berg via Neuschwanstein, Wieskirche, Wessobrunn, Dießen, Andechs, and Starnberg. It is usually done in six to nine days. **Alpenland-Touristik**, Postfach 101313, 86883 Landsberg am Lech, ☎ 08191-308-620, www.alpenlandtouristik.de, arranges hotel reservations and luggage forwarding on this route.

On Wheels

By Bicycle

Cycling routes go around both the Ammersee and Starnberger See, although at times normal roads with through traffic must be used. It is 50 km/31 miles or six hours cycling time around each lake. The route along the east bank of the Ammersee is sometimes far from the water. Cyclists often share the trails with hikers, making cycling difficult to impossible on busy summer weekends.

Bike It, Maximilianstrasse 4, 82319 Starnberg, ☎ 08151-746-430, www.bikeit.de, conducts guided cycling tours in the region for groups of at least four.

Bicycle rentals are available from every town in the region.

- Starnberg: **Radhaus Starnberg**, Wittelsbacherstraße 20, ☎ 08151-16-714, www.radhaus-starnberg.de.
- Berg-Bachhausen: **Radl-Sepp**, Dorsfstraße 5, ☎ 08151-50-343.
- Tutzing: **Dilitzer**, Hauptstraße 68, ☎ 08158-6247.
- Herrsching: **Peter Nandlinger**, Mühlfelder Straße 5, ☎ 08152-1266.
- Andechs: **Rudolf Bichler**, Am Bach 3a, ☎ 08152-2367.
- Dießen: **Sport Bernard**, Bahnhofstraße 5, ☎ 08807-940-402, and **Lauf- und Radsport Willner**, Bahnhofstraße 23, ☎ 08807-214-739.

In the Air

Hot Air Ballooning

Landstettener Ballon-Fahrten, Klosterholzweg 1, 82319 Starnberg-Landstetten, ☎ 08157-9104, www.landstettener-ballonfahrten.de, has flights in the lake region as well as Alpine crossings in winter.

On Water

Boating & Sailing

Electrical, pedal, and rowboats can be rented without reservations at the lakeside promenades in all the main towns along the lakes.

Sailboats can be rented along the **Starnberger See** in Tutzing from **Müller Johann**, Marienstraße 13, ☎ 08158- 7430, or **Surf- & Catcenter**, Nordbadstraße 1, ☎ 08158-6819, and along the **Ammersee** in Dießen from **Paul Gastl**, Seepromenade, ☎ 08807-8495; **Ernst Hans**, St. Alban 6, ☎ 08807-5646; or **Ammersee-Segelschule**, Seestraße 28, ☎ 08807-8415, www.ammersee-segelschule.de.

Windsurfers can be rented from **Surf Tools**, Schorn 1, Starnberg, ☎ 08178-909-611, www.surftools.de; **Surf- & Catcenter**, Nordbadstraße 1, Tutzing, ☎ 08158-6819, www.nordbad.de; or **Windsurfschule Dießen**, Buzallee 26, Dießen, ☎ 08807-1334.

Cruise Boats

Lake boats are operated on both the Starnberg and Ammer Lakes by **Bayerische Seen-Schifffahrt**, ☎ 08151-12-023, www.seenschifffahrt.de. Cruises are available from April to mid-October. A limited number of bicycles can be transported at €2.50 per day. People over 65 receive 25% discount on Mondays!

A full tour of the **Starnberger See** with stops at all towns takes just over three hours (€15), while a smaller one-hour tour (€8) is also available – most departures are from Starnberg. The Museum Cruise (€17) is a direct service from Starnberg to Bernried when the Buchheim Museum is open. It operates three times daily and takes one hour nonstop each way.

The full tour (€15) of the **Ammersee** takes four hours but one-hour cruises (€10) are available from Herrsching. Hersching to Dießen is 25 minutes (€5.40), while the return is 40 minutes (€6.70).

Where to Stay & Eat

Starnberg

Hotel Seehof Starnberg is well located close to the station, but most rooms have lake views. Rooms are modern and fairly spacious. The **Gallo Nero** (€€) serves Italian food. Bahnhofplatz 6, 82319 Starnberg, ☎ 08151-908-500, fax 08151-28-136, www.hotel-seehof-starnberg.de. (€€€)

Do not be fooled by the rather plain exterior of the **Starnberger Alm Illguths Gasthaus**, Schlossbergstraße 24, ☎ 08151-15-577, near the Schloss. The rustic interior would fit well in many a local history museum. The food is mostly regional while the selection of Württemberg wines approaches 200 varieties. Andechser beer is on tap. (€-€€)

The **Seerestaurant Undosa**, Seepromenade 1, ☎ 08151-998-930, is a Starnberg institution with fine lake views, which are reflected in the prices. The complex consists of a restaurant, café, bar, and disco. The food is international, with a fine selection of local fish dishes. (€-€€)

Berg

Hotel Schloss Berg

Hotel Schloss Berg got its name from the palace where King Ludwig II spent his last days but has no relation to the real palace other than being on the edge of its gardens close to the boat landing. The hotel has two buildings. The more modern Oberes Haus is slightly inland, with most rooms here having balconies. The older Unteres Haus has direct access to the lake. All rooms are large and comfortably furnished. The stylish **restau-**

rant (€€-€€€) serves mostly local cuisine. Seestraße 17, 82335 Berg, ☎ 08151-9630, fax 08151-96-352, www.hotelschlossberg.de. (€€-€€€€)

For hotel and restaurant price codes, see pages 50 and 52.

Feldafing

Golfhotel Kaiserin Elisabeth

The house in which Austrian Empress Sisi spent 24 summers is now the **Golfhotel Kaiserin Elisabeth**. It is quietly located with views of the adjacent golf course, the lake, and the Alps. Rooms are opulently furnished with all modern comforts and the ambiance that comes from its history. The stylish **restaurant** (€€-€€€) with a covered terrace serves regional and international cuisine. The **Sisi Stüberl** (€€) is a more relaxed tavern serving Bavarian food. Tutzinger Straße 2, 82340 Feldafing, ☎ 08157-93-090, fax 08157-930-9133, www.kaiserin-elisabeth.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Andechs

Two restaurants are run by Kloster Andechs. The **Klosergasthof Andechs**, Bergstraße 9, 82346 Andechs, ☎ 08152-93-090, www.klostergasthof.de, has been in virtually constant operation since 1438. In addition to the restaurant, food is also served in the lovely beer garden. The food is mostly local but some international dishes are also available. (€-€€€)

Things are considerably more informal in the **Bräustüberl**, ☎ 08152-376-261, slightly farther higher up on the hill. The various beer halls here can seat around 400 while another 1,200 can find a place on the various terraces. The food sold in the self-service kiosk is unashamedly Bavarian tavern-style. Most dishes are sold by weight. Queues can be long. Beer is around €2.50 per pint. (€-€€)

Dießen

Strandhotel Dießen is a small, modern hotel directly on the beach. All rooms have either balconies or a terrace with private garden. Rooms are comfortably furnished. A lakeside café serves drinks and small meals. Jahnstraße 10, 86911 Diessen, ☎ 08807-92-220, fax 08807-8958, www.diessen.net/strandhotel. (€€-€€€)

Seehaus, Seeweg Süd 22, ☎ 08807-7300, is in the suburb of Riederau north of Dießen. It is one of the best restaurants in the region and has lovely views from its terrace. The food is international, ranging from Mediterranean to Japanese. (€€-€€€)

Youth Hostel

The only youth hostel in the region is **DJH Possenhofen**. This modern hostel opened in 2002 and is probably the closest a German youth hostel has ever come to resembling a designer hotel. It is a 10-minute hike from Pöcking station and only minutes from the lake. The hostel is closed for most of December. Kurt-Stieler-Straße 18, 82343 Pöcking, ☎ 08157-996-611, fax 08157-996-612.

Camping

Campingplatz beim Fischer is on the southern shore of the Starnberger See with direct access to the lake. It has 150 lots and is open from January to November. Buchscharnstraße 10, 82541 St. Heinrich, ☎ 08801-802, fax 08801-2036, www.camping-beim-fischer.de.

Nearby is the beautifully located **Campingplatz Seeshaupt**. It has 100 lots and is open from April to October. St-Heinricher Straße 127, 82402 Seeshaupt, ☎ 08801-1528, fax 08801-911-807, www.campingplatz-seeshaupt.de.

Zugspitz Region

The southwestern part of Upper Bavaria is known as the Zugspitz Region, named after Germany's highest mountain peak. Apart from the **Zugspitz** itself, the region is also the location of **Garmisch-Partenkirchen**, the single most popular ski resort in Germany. Other attractions include the passion play town **Oberammergau**, which is also famous for its woodcarvings and painted house façades. **Kloster Ettal** is a beautiful Baroque monastery and nearby **Schloss Linderhof** is the only one of Ludwig II's castles that was actually completed. The **Wieskirche** is often seen as the definitive Bavarian Rococo church. **Mittenwald** is the quintessential Bavarian Alpine village with a picture-postcard location in a narrow valley that historically provided access to Austria and via the Brenner Pass to Italy as well. To the north is the village of **Murnau**, which played an important role in the development of art at the start of the 20th century.

Although several cultural sights are scattered through the region, the main attraction is nature. The Alps are ever-present, popular for hiking in summer and skiing in winter. Tourism is the main industry of the region and visitors are well catered for in terms of accommodation, transportation, and other services.

Tourist Office

Tourismusgemeinschaft Zugspitz-Region, Richard-Strauss-Platz 1a, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-180-484, fax 08221-180-485, www.zugspitz-region.de.

Getting Around

Garmisch-Partenkirchen can be reached from Munich in 90 minutes on at least hourly trains. (Driving along the Autobahn A95 can be slightly faster in light traffic.) All trains stop in Murnau, from where a sideline provides a service to Oberammergau. However, coming from the south, it is often faster to take a bus to Oberammergau from Garmisch-Partenkirchen or from Oberau.

Garmisch-Partenkirchen has a good bus system that connects to all sights and adventure areas. Ettal and Oberammergau can be reached in 40 minutes on at least two buses per hour, while Mittenwald is a 20-minute train ride away. Bus services to the Wieskirche, Schwangau, and Füssen are available, but double-check return schedules – the services are especially limited on weekends.

Driving is easy in the region and is the best way to get to several sights on the same day. It is often sensible to take shortcuts through Austria – where fuel is significantly cheaper – but stay off the highways or purchase a vignette (toll pass).

Garmisch-Partenkirchen

Garmisch-Partenkirchen

This is the most visited Bavarian Alpine resort. It became internationally famous after hosting the 1936 Winter Olympic Games and several international competitions since. The town of just under 30,000 is at an altitude of only 720 m/2,370 ft, but it is surrounded by Germany's highest mountains. These allow for excellent skiing conditions as well as popular summer hiking.

The town's two parts unified in the early 20th century and they still reflect some differences. Partenkirchen is on the eastern side of the railway line and has a history going back to Roman times. It was long an important station on the trade routes from Italy to Augsburg. It has a more historic look to its center, while Garmisch developed as a Ger-

Garmisch-Partenkirchen (Garmisch-Partenkirchen Tourismus)

manic town. Its center is more modern and reflects much of what modern tourists expect of a ski-resort – first-class shopping.

The whole region is stunningly beautiful, with its mountain panoramas. Interesting excursions include the amazing Baroque **monastery in Ettal**, **Oberammergau** with its woodcarving tradition, King Ludwig II's fabulous **Linderhof palace**, the Baroque **Wieskirche**, and, of course, the mountain peaks, including **Zugspitze**. Schloss Neuschwanstein is easily accessible by car.

Information Sources

Tourist Information, Richard-Strauss-Platz 2, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-180-700, www.garmisch-partenkirchen.de.

Sightseeing

Garmisch-Partenkirchen is in such a lovely area that indoor sights are best left for rainy days. In addition, excursions are generally more interesting than the sights in the town itself.

In the Garmisch part of town is the **Neue Pfarrkirche St Martin** (New Church), a single-nave church with two half-round chapels. It was erected in 1730-34 in a Rococo style with stuccowork and wall paintings. The **Alte Kirche Garmisch** (Old Church) has a Romanesque core (1280) but was altered into a mainly Gothic structure during the 15th century. It has two equal naves with a single central column supporting the Gothic vaulting. Some 15th- and 16th-century wall paintings

KERAMIK
Fraundorfer
Gasthof

Ludwigstraße with typical Lüftmalerei façades

were preserved. Historic houses are in Loisach, Frühlings, and Kreuzstraße.

Ludwigstraße leads from the Bahnhof east through Partenkirchen. It makes a sharp right turn to become the **Historische Ludwigstraße** (Historic Ludwigstraße), with many historic buildings and painted façades. More historic buildings are in Sonnenbergstraße and Ballengasse.

The **Werdenfels Museum**, Ludwigstraße 47, ☎ 08821-2134, has an interesting exhibition of masks, furniture and decorative items. It is in a former 17th-century grocer's house – the only building in the street that survived a town fire in 1865 intact. Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday from 10 am to 1 pm and from 3 to 6 pm, weekends from 10 am to 1 pm only. Admission is €1.50.

Mittenwald

Mittenwald is 25 km/15 miles east of Garmisch-Partenkirchen. It is generally considered the most picturesque of all Bavarian Alpine villages. Parts of it look as if they came straight from a tourist brochure.

Goethe described the town as a living picture book and the attraction remains despite the huge number of visitors.

During the Middle Ages, Mittenwald was rich due to its strategic position on the trade route from Munich via the Austrian Brenner Pass to Italy and especially Venice. However, by the mid-17th century, decline set in as trade routes shifted. Violin production has played an important role in the local economy since then. The town was also famous for its fine woodcarving and *Luftmalerei* (trompe-l'oeil) house façades – both arts nowadays more associated with Oberammergau.

Tourist Office

Tourist-Information Mittenwald, Dammkarstraße 3, 82481 Mittenwald, ☎ 08823-33-981, www.mittenwald.de.

Sightseeing

The main attractions of Mittenwald are its beautiful location and the Alpine houses, many with painted façades. Hiking, cycling, and skiing are popular activities. The **Karwendel ski area** has Germany's second-highest cable-car route and a seven-km/4.2-mile downhill ski slope.

Mittenwald

Mittenwald is also famous for violins. In 1684, Matthias Klotz, a former pupil of Stradivarius, settled here and started the violin-making industry that continues to the present. The **Geigenbau- und Heimatmuseum** (Violin and Local History Museum), Ballenhausgasse 3, ☎ 08823-2522, tells the story. It is open Tuesday to Friday from 10 am to 1 pm and 3 to 6 pm. On weekends, it is open from 10 am to 1 pm. Admission is €2.

Ettal

Ettal is a small village nine miles north of Garmisch-Partenkirchen. The main sight is **Kloster Ettal** (monastery), Kaiser-Ludwig-Platz 1, 82488 Ettal, ☎ 08822-740, www.kloster-ettal.de, which is next to the main through-road.

In 1330, Emperor Ludwig the Bavarian founded a Benedictine monastery here. The original Gothic church has the only example in Germany of a figure-eight floor plan – it is still the basis of the present church. The monastery was relatively obscure in its first centuries, but became more prominent in the 18th century due to an increase in pilgrims and the foundation of a school. In the 18th century, the monastery and especially the church were converted to a Baroque style. Following a major fire in 1744, the marvelous cupola was added. The interior is an excellent example of Bavarian Baroque excess, with the cupola fresco by Johann Jakob Zeiller. The stuccowork is mostly by Johann Georg Uebelherr and Franz Xaver Schumzer, both from the Wessobrunn School. Some of the stuccowork is by Johann Baptist Zimmermann. The church is open daily from 8 am to 6 pm.

Part of the monastery is still functioning and brews an excellent beer, as well as a famous liqueur. Ettal also houses a prestigious private school.

Linderhof

Schloss Linderhof, Linderhof 112, 82488 Ettal, ☎ 08822-92-030, fax 08822-920-311, www.linderhof.de, is the only one of Mad King Ludwig's palaces that was actually completed. It is the smallest and least pretentious of them all. Still, it uses a wide range of conflicting styles and is over-decorated inside. The Petit Trianon in Versailles was probably an inspiration. It has many references to French King Louis XIV, with whom King Ludwig became obsessed. Highlights of the interior include the sumptuous bedroom, a magnificent hall of mirrors, and King Ludwig's favorite: a table that could be hoisted from a floor below so he could eat his dinner in peace without servants hovering around.

Schloss Linderhof

The Schloss is in a beautiful English-style landscaped park with wonderful Alpine backdrops. There are several interesting features in the park. Directly in front of the Schloss is a fountain with a gilded Neptune statue that spouts water up to 30 m/100 ft. In the park are a Moorish Pavilion and a Moroccan House that King Ludwig bought at world exhibitions in Paris. Several other structures remind one of Wagner operas, which Ludwig loved: a grotto of Venus (*Tannhäuser*), a Hundingshütte pavilion (*The Valkyries*), and the Gurnemanzklause hermitage (*Parzifal*).

The Schloss is open daily from April to September, 9 am to 6 pm, and from October to March, 10 am to 4 pm. In winter, the structures in the garden are closed. Admission is €7 (€6 in winter), which includes a compulsory guided tour of the palace, available in English. Advance reservations are possible in writing or by fax. That requires a small service fee (worth paying when visiting in the high season).

The Schloss is 10 km/six miles west of Ettal on the B23. It can be reached by car, hiking, cycling, or by bus. The B23 is a convenient shortcut through Austria to Füssen. The road is, however, one of the first in the region to close when weather is inclement.

Oberammergau

Oberammergau Tourismus, Eugen-Papst-Straße 9a, 82487 Oberammergau, ☎ 08822-92-310, www.oberammergau.de.

Sightseeing

Oberammergau is a small village about 20 km/12 miles north of Garmisch-Partenkirchen. It is most famous for its **Passion Play** but is also a major woodcarving center. The village is pretty but at times very commercial and full of religious kitsch.

Oberammergau Passion Play

The town has many painted façades in the local *Lüftlmalerei* (trompe l'oeil) style. The theme of the paintings is mostly religious, but some façades are secular, with fairy tales and beer hall scenes. The **Pilatushaus**, Ludwig-Thoma-Straße 10, ☎ 8822-92-310, is a particularly good example. It houses a gallery and workshops of carved wood items. Before buying woodcarvings from the wide range of shops in town, look here to see what true skill can produce. A shop next to the Pilatushaus sells items produced here. Opening hours are weekdays from May to October, 1 to 6 pm. Admission is free.

In 1633, the villagers of Oberammergau made a pledge to act out Christ's Passion if the approaching plague passed the town by. The first play was staged in 1634. Presently, the **Passion Play** is performed every 10 years in a huge open-air theater specially built for the play. About 2,000 performers are needed for the 100 performances between May and September. Some 1,000 performers are used for each performance, which lasts six hours. All actors are amateurs, who either were born in Oberammergau or have lived here at least 20 years. The next performance is in 2010 and tickets will go on sale in 2008.

In recent years, the theater has also been used in summer to stage major operas such as *Nabucco* and *Aida*. For details, contact **Oberammergau Tourismus**, Eugen-Papst-Straße 9a, 82487 Oberammergau, ☎ 08822-92-310, www.oberammergau.de.

Wieskirche

The magnificent Wieskirche, often seen as the definitive Bavarian Rococo church, is north of Oberammergau. It is fully described as part of the *Southern Romantic Road* in the *Allgäu* chapter.

Murnau on the Staffelsee

Murnau's history goes back to its time as a station on Roman trade routes. A first church and later monastery was built in the seventh century on the Island of Wörth in the Staffelsee. Around 1400, the town came under the control of Kloster Ettal and remained in the monastery's possession until secularization in 1803 made it part of Bavaria. The town suffered like others in the region from the consequences of the Thirty Years' War and the plague, while three devastating fires during the 18th and 19th centuries added to the misery.

The economy improved after the town was connected to the railway line at the end of the 19th century. However, Murnau is always primarily associated with *Der Blaue Reiter* and the artists that lived and visited here during the early 20th century. Gabriele Münter and Wassily Kandinsky bought a house in town and many contemporaries such as Franz Marc (see Kochel), Paul Klee, and Alexej von Jawlensky were frequent visitors.

Information Sources

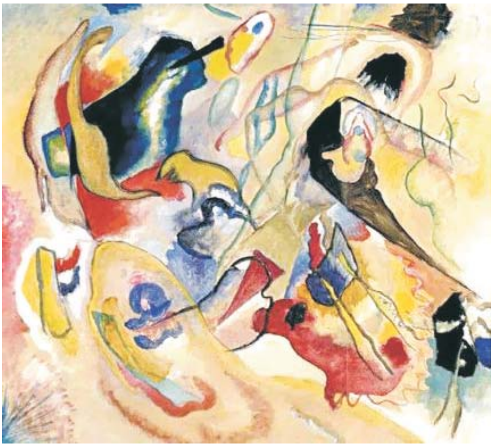
Tourist Information Murnau, Kohlgruber Straße1, 82418 Murnau am Staffelsee, ☎ 08841-61-410, www.murnau.de.

Sightseeing

The heart of town is the Ober (Upper) and Untermarkt (Lower Market). In 1906, famous Munich Art Nouveau architect Emanuel von Seidl, painted these gabled Biedermeier and neo-Classical façades in bright pastel colors. It is hard to imagine today why this was controversial back then and why anyone would have preferred the previously predominantly grey buildings. The Rathaus is neo-Gothic from 1842.

The excellent **Schlossmuseum**, Schloßhof 4-5, ☎ 08841-476-201, www.schlossmuseum-murnau.de, is a very interesting local art and history museum in the former Murnau castle. The emphasis is, not surprisingly, on artists associated with the *Neue Künstlervereinigung München* and *Der Blaue Reiter*. It has a large collection of works by Gabriele Münter. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €4.

DER BLAUE REITER



Sketch for Deluge II (Kandinsky, 1912)

One of the most influential art manifestos of the 20th century was *Der Blaue Reiter* (The Blue Rider), an almanac of art published by artists, that appeared in 1912 and 1914. It was published by Franz Marc and Wassily Kandinsky, who were members of the *Neue Kunstlervereinigung München* (New Munich Artists' Association) and spent much time in the Murnau region. Kandinsky owned a house here while Marc lived in nearby Kochel. The artists attempted to create new art without giving up individual style or spirituality and marked the movement toward lyrical abstract paintings. A huge collection of work by the movement is in the Lenbachhaus in Munich. Other artists belonging to the group included August Macke, Gabriele Munter, Paul Klee, and Alexei Jawlensky. The First World War put an end to the movement's plans for exhibitions and further activities. The Russians Kandinsky and Jawlensky had to leave Germany at the outbreak of hostilities in 1914. (Both returned after the war, with Kandinsky becoming a teacher at the Bauhaus in Weimar.) Macke died at the front in 1914, while Marc died at the Battle of Verdun (1916).

The **Münter-Haus**, Kottmüllerallee 6, ☎ 08841-628-880, is a museum in the house where Kandinsky and Gabriele Münter spent their summers from 1909 to 1914 and where Münter lived again from 1931 to her death in 1962. It is also known as the Russenhaus (Russian House) after the nationality of Kandinsky and Jawlensky, who was a frequent guest. Much of the interior is as it was during the time Kandinsky lived here. Also on show is the Millions Cellar, so named because Münter hid numerous works of Kandinsky here from the Nazis, who considered his work degenerate. These works were donated to the Lensbachhaus in Munich. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 2 to 5 pm. Admission is free.

Murnau is on the banks of the Staffelsee, one of Bavaria's most popular lakes for its lovely location as well as the relatively high temperatures that the water can reach in summer (up to 27°C/81°F). The lake is famous for having seven islands, including Wörth, where one of the first monasteries in Bavaria was built, and Buchau, which has a campsite. A 22-km/14-mile hiking trail encircles the island. One-hour boat cruises are available three to four times a day from mid-May to September

Kurkonzerte (concerts) are held in the Garmisch Kurpark from May to September, daily, except on Friday. The Kurpark Partenkirchen has concerts during summer, usually on Wednesday.

Richard Strauss died in Garmisch-Partenkirchen in 1949. The **Richard Strauss Institute**, Schnitzschulstraße 19, ☎ 08821-910-950, www.richard-strauss-insitute.de, frequently arranges concerts where his and other composers' music is played.

Festivals

The **Bootsprozession an Fronleichnam** in Seehausen near Murnau is the only remaining boat procession in Upper Bavaria on this important Roman Catholic holiday. A large number of boats and locals in traditional costume take part in this colorful event that involves a parade through the streets of the town before boats set out for Wörth Island. Details are available from Verkehrsamt, Johannisstraße 8, 82418 Seehausen am Staffelsee, ☎ 08841-3550, www.seehausen-am-staffelsee.de.

Shopping

Shopping is a popular activity in Garmisch-Partenkirchen and the range reflects what visitors to the town expect. There are many small boutiques and jewelers for sophisticates (in German referred to as Schiki-Mickis) and traditional souvenir shops for mainly foreign tourists. Popular souvenir shops include the **Mall of**

Bavaria, Chamonixstraße 6, ☎ 08821-943-467, which sells a wide range of traditional Bavarian products.

Käthe Wohlfahrt, the famous Christmas decorations shop from Rothenburg ob der Tauber, has a branch at Marienplatz 6, Garmisch-Partenkirchen, and in Oberammergau at Dorfstraße 6 and 25.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

The Murnau tourist office conducts a wide range of guided tours. The standard Old Town walks are April to October on Saturday at 10 pm. Other thematic tours, mostly on history, art, and architecture, take place on most Tuesday evenings and sometimes on Thursday – the times depend on the theme and season.

Countryside Hikes & Mountaineering

Garmisch-Partenkirchen is in a lovely area with many hiking opportunities. Popular starting points are at the mountain stations of cable cars. Often walks with spectacular views are possible without strenuous inclines. Excellent hiking maps are available from the tourist information office or any bookshop.

A popular walk is in the **Partnachklamm gorge**. This narrow gorge has bizarre rocks and arcades carved by the thundering Partnach Alpine stream. Take rain gear in summer. It is also open, but mostly frozen, during winter. A round-trip from the Partenkirchen ski area takes about 90 minutes.

A similar walk is in the **Höllentalklamm** from Hammersbach towards Zugspitze. A small entrance fee is payable before entering a half-mile gorge with tunnels, arcades, and bridges.

The tourist office arranges guided mountain hikes from mid-June to September on most Tuesdays and

Partnachklamm gorge

Thursdays. The route depends on the weather and details are provided only a day in advance.

Mountain guides are available through the **Bergsteigerschule Zugspitze**, Am Gudiberg 7, ☎ 08821-58-999, www.bergsteigerschule-zugspitze.de. Guided trips ranging from a few hours to several days are offered and can include hiking or rock and ice climbing.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Bicycle rentals are available in Garmisch-Partenkirchen from **Trek-Pro-Shop**, Rathausplatz 11, ☎ 08821-79-528, www.trekproshop.de, and from **Multi Cycle**, Bahnhofstraße 6, ☎ 08821-948-994, www.multicycle.de. Mountain bikes only are offered by **Sport Total**, Marienplatz 18, ☎ 08821-1425, www.agentursporttotal.de. In Mittenwald, bicycles can be rented from **Fa Adolf Frank**, Dammkarstraße 39, ☎ 088823-1293.

Adventures in the Air

Cable Cars

The mountains around Garmisch-Partenkirchen are divided for practical purposes into two main areas: Zugspitze and the Classic area, which includes Alpspitz, Kreueck, Hausberg, and Wank. All the cable cars are operated by **Bayerische Zugspitzbahn Bergbahn**, Olympiastraße 27, ☎ 08821-7970, www.zugspitze.de.

Zugspitze

Bayerische Zugspitzbahn

At 2,962 m/9,715 ft, Zugspitze is Germany's highest mountain, with the only glacial skiing area in the country. It is a popular year-round destination.

Other than climbing, the peak can be reached in two ways: via the Bayerische Zugspitzbahn or the Eibsee-Seilbahn. The **Bayerische Zugspitzbahn**, ☎ 08821-

7970, is a cogwheel train that runs from Garmisch-Partenkirchen via Eibsee to the Gletscherbahnhof (Glacier Station) at 2,590 m/8,495 ft. Part of the journey is in a tunnel carved through the mountain rock. The trip takes 75 minutes from Garmisch-Partenkirchen, or 40 minutes from Eibsee. From the Gletscherbahnhof, the 1,000-m/3,280-ft-long **Gletscherbahn** cable car goes to the Bergstation near the top in four minutes (€4 one-way if not used in conjunction with the Zugspitzbahn).

A much faster alternative is to take the **Eibsee-Seilbahn**, ☎ 08821-7970, from Eibsee directly to the Bergstation. The large cable car gondolas take only 10 minutes. (Due to the rapid changes in air pressure, children under 18 months are not allowed in the gondolas.)

Eibsee-Seilbahn

Round-trip tickets are €43 in summer and €34 in winter. One-way tickets are €25. A combination of the cable car and train can be used on round-trip tickets. The service is available year-round from 8 am to 4:45 pm, with longer hours in the high season.

A day ski pass is €37 for the Zugspitze area.

The "Classic" Area

The **Alpspitzbahn** cable car goes from Garmisch to the 2,050-m/6,722-ft Osterfelderkopf peak in nine minutes. It operates daily from November to February, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, March to June, 8:30 am to 5 pm, and July to October, 8 am to 5:30 pm. Round-trip journeys are €20, or €15 one-way.

The **Hochalmbahn** cable car goes from Hochalm to Osterfeldkopf in four minutes. It operates at the same times as the Alpspitzbahn and costs €4 one-way.

The **Kreuzeckbahn** cable car connects Garmisch and the 1,640-m/5,379-ft Kreuzeck in seven minutes. It operates year-round from 8:15 am, with the final ride 15 minutes after the Alpspitzbahn. Round-trip journeys are €16, or €11 one-way.

The **Hausbergbahn** cable car operates only in winter and connects Garmisch with the 1,340-m/4,395-ft Hausberg in five minutes. Operating hours are daily from November to April, 8:30 am to 5 pm. Round-trip journeys are €11, or €8 one-way.

Combination tickets with hikes between the mountain stations are available. The Kreuzberg-Hausberg combination is €15.50 and requires an hour's hike. An Alpspitz-Rundfahrt combines the Alpspitz, Hochalm, and Kreuzeck cable cars with hikes of 30 minutes to an hour between the mountain stations. It costs €23.50.

A one-day ski pass valid on all Classic area cable cars costs €31.

The Wankbahn Area

The **Wankbahn** operates only in summer and connects Partenkirchen with the Bergstation (1,755 m/5,756 ft) on the Wank (1,780 m/5,838 ft) in 18 minutes. It operates daily from May to November, 8:45 am to 5 pm (4:30 pm in October and November). Round-trip journeys are €17, or €12 one-way.

Mittenwald-Karwendel Area

The **Karwendelbahn**, Alpenkorpsstraße 1, 82481 Mittenwald, ☎ 08823-8480, www.karwendelbahn.de, cable car in Mittenwald lifts visitors in 10 minutes from 922 m/3,025 ft to 2,244 m/7,362 ft, the second-highest mountain station in Germany. Round-trip journeys are €21 (or €13 one-way). From here, seven km/4.3 miles of difficult, unprepared ski slopes are available, as well as hiking routes.

The **Kranzberg-Sessellift** (chairlift), Kranzbergstraße 24, ☎ 08823-1553, transports visitors to 1,220 m/4,000 ft, from where several hiking routes lead into the mountains and in winter 15 km/nine miles of easy to medium ski runs and a toboggan run go back to the valley. Several other ski lifts operate in winter only.

A one-day ski pass for the Kranzberg area is €21.

Hangliding & Paragliding

Tandem flights are arranged by **Sport Total**, Marienplatz 18, ☎ 08821-1425, www.agentursporttotal.de; **Gleitschirmschule Garmisch-Partenkirchen**, Am Hausberg 8, ☎ 08821-74-260, www.gleitschirmschule-gap.de; and **Aerotaxi**, Beim Gerber, 82481 Mittenwald, ☎ 0171-281-9199, www.aerotaxi.de. Winter and summer flights are available from various peaks in the region.

Facing page: Hangliding, Garmisch-Partenkirchen

HOLIDAY PASS

During the summer season, the Holiday Pass allows free entry to some sights and local transportation as well as one cable car per day in the Classic area. The train or bus can be taken to Eibsee, but the final assault on Zugspitze itself is not included. It costs €35 and is available from tourist offices.

Adventures on Horseback

Sledge in Berchtesgadener Land

Horse-drawn carriage and sleigh rides can be arranged at ☎ 08821-942-920. A postal carriage rides daily from June to September from Richard-Strauss-Platz to the Badersee – reservations through the tourist information office.

Adventures on Water

Boat Rental

During summer, rowboats can be rented without reservations at several lakes, including the Staffelsee, Riessersee, Badersee, Eibsee, and Pflegersee.

Rafting

Wildwasserschule Sprenzel, Alpspitzstraße 16, ☎ 08821-52-033, www.sprenzel-sport.de, arranges wild-water rafting, canyoning, and kayak trips on the streams in the region (often in Austria).

On Wednesday and Sunday, **Bavaria Raft**, ☎ 08841-676-9870, www.bavariaraft.de, arranges guided rafting trips on the River Loisach from Farchant to Murnau, a three-hour trip. Reservations are essential. Boat rentals are also available for do-it-yourself trips.

Adventures on Snow

The ski season is long and lasts from November to May, with Zugspitze's snow usually guaranteed. For actual snow conditions call the snow telephone, ☎ 08821-797-979.

Alpine Skiing

Garmisch-Partenkirchen is one of Germany's premier Alpine skiing areas, with 118 km/71 miles of downhill slopes. Zugspitze is the only glacial skiing area in Germany. The *Kandahar* is Germany's only downhill run with a World Cup License.

If the adjacent Austrian slopes are added, 210 km/126 miles of downhill runs, serviced by 105 ski lifts and cable cars, are available. The Holiday Pass, from €83 for three days, gives access to the whole area. Up to 120,000 people per hour can be transported, meaning very few lines and short waiting times.

Cross-Country Skiing

For cross-country skiers, 110km/66 miles of trails (*Loipen*), both traditional and freestyle skiing, are available for free. Kainzenbad has a floodlit trail.

Ice Skating

Ice skating is possible in the **Olympia-Eissport-Zentrum**, ☎ 08821-52-578, www.gemeindewerke-garmisch-partenkirchen.de. It is open to the public from July to Easter.

Rental Equipment & Ski Schools

Garmisch-Partenkirchen has many ski schools – all also rent out equipment. Alpine and cross-country ski schools include **Skischule Alpin**, Reintalstraße 8, ☎ 08821-945-676, www.skischulealpin.de, and **Skischule Garmisch-Partenkirchen**, Am Hausberg 8, ☎ 08821-4931, www.skischule-gap.de.

Erste Skilanglaufschule Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Olympia-Skistadion, Osteingang, ☎ 08821-1516, www.ski-langlauf-schule.de, is a school for cross-country skiing only.

Snowboardschule Erwin Gruber, Mittenwalder Straße 47d, ☎ 08821-76-490, www.snowboard-schule.de, is a school for snowboarding.

Skiing equipment can be rented from **Skiverleih Ostler**, at the Hausbergbahn, ☎ 08821-3999; **Welt des Sports**, Fürstenstraße 20, ☎ 08821-72-601, www.skiverleih-garmisch.de; and **Snowboard & Skicenter Zugspitzplatt**, on Zugspitze, ☎ 08821-74-505.

Snowshoes can be rented from **Schneeshuh Verleih**, Reintalerstraße 8, ☎ 08821-945-676, www.schneeschuh-verleih.de.

Snowboarding

Around 21 km/12 miles of slopes are open to snowboarders. The most popular area is on the Zugspitzeplatte. The area is a freestyle paradise with a super pipe 120 m/394 ft long, 16 m/52 ft wide, and five m/16 ft high, a line with four straight jumps and leaps, and a rail-combo.

Tobogganing

There are several challenging tobogganing courses in the area. **Rodelbahn am Kainzenbad** (1,060 m/3,477 ft with a 180-m/590-ft drop) is a natural tobogganing course, **Partnachalm** (280 m/896 ft with a drop of 915 m/2,928 ft) and **St. Martin am Grasberg** (320 m/1,024 ft with a drop of 1,050 m/3,360 ft) are on streets that are not cleared in winter. The longest course with the highest drop is on the **Hausberg** (650 m/2,080 ft with a drop of 2,132 m/6,822 ft). First ascend the peak with the cable car and then use the summer hiking trail, which is prepared as a tobogganing course in winter. On Wednesdays from 5 to 8 pm, the cable car is €9 for unlimited rides. **Skiverleih Ostler** next to the Hausbergbahn rents out equipment, or contact any of the ski schools

Where to Stay & Eat

For hotel and restaurant price codes, see pages 50 and 52.

Partenkirchen

Reindl's Partenkirchner Hof

The **Reindl's Partenkirchner Hof** is a luxury country-style hotel in the heart of town close to the station. Rooms are romantic with solid wood furniture. Some are luxurious. Many have balconies with views of the Wetterstein Mountain. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves local as well as international cuisine and has a long wine list. Bahnhofstraße 15, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-943-870, fax 08821-9438-7250, www.reindls.de. (€€-€€€€)

The **Post-Hotel Partenkirchen** is in the heart of the Old Town. It has a Baroque façade and inside it combines antiques with modern furniture. Rooms are comfortable and some have great mountain views. Four **restaurants** (€-€€€) on the premises serve international and regional cuisine. Ludwigstraße 49, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-93-630, fax 08821-9363-2222, www.post-hotel.de. (€€-€€€)

Facing page: Zugspitze with the Eibsee (www.bayern.by)

The nearby **Mercure Hotel** is in a small park. It was renovated in 2001 and has modern rooms with typical Alpine wooden furniture. The rustic **restaurant** (€-€€) serves regional specialties. Mittenwalder Straße 2, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-7560, fax 08821-74-268, www.mercure.de. (€€-€€€)

Garmisch

HOTEL ZUGSPITZE

Hotel Zugspitze

Hotel Zugspitze is a typical Bavarian Alpine hotel with balconies. Rooms are pleasant with country-style furniture. The hotel is halfway between the station and the Kurpark. Klammstraße 19, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-9010, fax 08821-901-333, www.hotel-zugspitze.de. (€€-€€€€)

The **Staudacherhof Hotel** is a very nice spot close to the center of town. Some rooms are luxurious and spacious. The wellness area is large and offers many options. The rustic **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves regional cuisine. Höllentalstraße 48, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-9290, fax 08821-929-333, www.staudacherhof.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Clausings Posthotel** is in the heart of Garmisch at the edge of the major shopping street. Rooms are individually furnished and some are quite comfortable. Many have views of the Zugspitze. The **restaurant** (€-€€€) serves regional as well as international cuisine. It has a pleasant terrace as well as a historic bar area. Marienplatz 12, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-7090, fax 08821-709-205, www.clausings-posthotel.de. (€€-€€€)

The small **Aschenbrenner Hotel** is quietly located in a 19th-century villa next to the Loisach stream only minutes from the Kurhaus. The rooms are stylishly furnished and most have splendid views of the mountains. Loisachstraße 46, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-95-970, fax 08821-959-795, www.hotel-aschenbrenner.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten** is a block from the station. It has nice rooms with solid wood furniture. All rooms have mountain views and some have balconies. The large **restaurant** (€-€€) is decorated with hunting trophies and serves hearty local dishes. Bahnhofstraße 23, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-9160, fax 08821-4486, www.vierjahreszeiten.cc. (€€)

Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten

The **Alpenhof Restaurant**, Am Kurpark 10, ☎ 08821-59-055, serves hearty local dishes as well as Mediterranean cuisine. (€-€€)

Oberammergau

HOTEL
HOTEL WITTELSBACH

Hotel Wittelsbach (*Galen Frysinger*)

Hotel Wittelsbach is a typical Alpine-style building in the center of the town. Rooms are attractive, with solid wood furniture. The **Ammergauer Stub'n** (€-€€) serves international cuisine and local specialties. Road noise can be a problem in some rooms. Dorfstraße 21, 82487 Oberammergau, ☎ 08822-92-800, fax 08822-928-0100, www.hotelwittelsbach.de. (€€)

The **Parkhotel Sonnenhof** is at the edge of the town away from the crowds. It is modern with stylish rooms – each with a balcony. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€), open for dinner only, serves regional cuisine. König-Ludwig-Straße 12, 82487 Oberammergau, ☎ 08822-9130, fax 08822-3047, www.parkhotel-sonnenhof.de. (€€€)

Hotel Alte Post is in the heart of town in a 350-year-old building. Rooms are simply furnished in solid wood and have wooden or stuccowork ceilings. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves Bavarian food. Road noise can be a problem. Dorfstraße 19, 82487 Oberammergau, ☎ 08822-9100, fax 08822-910-100, www.altepost.ogau.de. (€€)

Hotel Landhaus Feldmeier is outside Oberammergau on the road to Ettal. It is in two typical Upper Bavarian buildings with geraniums on the balconies. Rooms are comfortably furnished in pine and all have either balconies or access to terraces. The **restaurant**, open for dinner only, (€€-€€€), serves regional and seasonal specialties. Ettaler Straße 29, 82487 Oberammergau, ☎ 08822-3011, fax 08822-6631, www.hotel-feldmeier.de. (€€)

Hotel Landhaus Feldmeier

Ettal

The huge **Hotel Ludwig der Bayer** is run by the Benedictine order. Although there are plenty of carved wood religious objects in the hotel, life here is anything but monastic. Rooms are furnished in solid wood furniture. The hotel has a huge **restaurant** (€€), popular with bus parties, which can mean serious waiting times for service. Kaiser-Ludwig-Platz 10, 82488 Ettal, ☎ 08822-9150, fax 08822-74-480. (€€)

The much smaller **Hotel Zur Post** is on the same square. It is a typical Alpine guesthouse with flowers on the balconies and ample unpainted wood in the interior. Rooms are pleasant. The hotel is popular with families. The **restaurant** (€-€€€) is open for dinner only and serves regional cuisine. Kaiser-Ludwig-Platz 18, 82488 Ettal, ☎ 08822-3596, fax 08822-6399, www.posthotel-ettal.de. (€€)

HOTEL LUDWIG DER BAYER
Hotel Ludwig der Bayer

Ettal-Linderhof

Schlosshotel Linderhof

Schlosshotel Linderhof is quietly located right next to the grounds of Schloss Linderhof and has welcomed guests for well over a century. Rooms are stylishly furnished in typical country-house style with all modern comforts. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves regional specialties. Linderhof 14, 82488 Ettal-Linderhof, ☎ 08822-790, fax 08822-4347, www.schlosshotel-linderhof.de. (€€)

Murnau

Alpenhof Murnau

The **Alpenhof Murnau** is a luxury hotel and member of the Relais & Chateaux group. It is a large complex with a wide variety of spa and sport facilities as well bicycle rentals on-site. It is south of the Old Town at the edge of a nature conservation area. Rooms are luxuriously furnished using rich colors and dark woods. Many have views of the Alps. The stylish **Reiterzimmer** (€€€-€€€€) is a Michelin-star gourmet restaurant serving mostly international nouvelle cuisine. The **Hofmann's** (€€-€€€) is more rustic with local and international food. Ramsachstraße 8, 82418 Murnau, ☎ 08841-4910, fax 08841-491-100, www.alpenhof-murnau.com. (€€€€)

Hotel Angerbräu

Hotel Angerbräu is at the south end of the pedestrian zone. It combines a 17th-century building with modern comforts. Rooms are furnished to high standards with excellent modern bathrooms. The **restaurant** (€-€€) has mostly Bavarian cuisine but also a decent vegetarian selection. Untermarkt 44, 82418 Murnau, ☎ 08841-625-876, fax 08841-625-877, www.angerbraeu.de. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Klausenhof am Kurpark is conveniently located in the heart of town. It is a typical Upper Bavarian hotel with numerous balconies. All rooms are nonsmoking and furnished with all modern needs in mind. The rustic **Burgklause** (€-€€) serves mostly Bavarian cuisine but also dishes from Tirol. Burggraben 8-10, 82418 Murnau, ☎ 08841-61-160, fax 08841-5043, www.klausenhof-murnau.de. (€€-€€€)

Kargs Bräustüberl, Untermarkt 27, ☎ 08841-8272, is the only surviving traditional brewery tavern in town. It specializes in *Weißbier* (wheat beer) and serves typical Bavarian tavern food at pleasantly low prices. The décor has not changed in half a century. (€-€€)

Youth Hostels

DJH Garmisch-Partenkirchen

The **DJH Garmisch-Partenkirchen** is three km/two miles north of town in the suburb of Burgrain. The whole facility was refurbished in 2005. It is closed from mid-November until after Christmas. It can be reached from the station on Bus 3 or 4. Jochstraße 10, 82467 Garmisch-Partenkirchen, ☎ 08821-967-050, fax 08821-967-0527.

The **DJH Oberammergau** has an idyllic location southwest of town on the banks of the Ammer. It is closed from November until after Christmas. Cross-country skiing equipment can be rented on-site. It is a 10-minute hike from the station. Malensteinweg 10, 82487 Oberammergau, ☎ 08822-4114, fax 08822-1695.

The **DJH Mittenwald** has a picture-perfect location four km/2½ miles north of the town in the nature conservation area Buckelwiesen. The downside of this quiet location is the absence of public transportation other than taxis, or you can take an hour hike from the station. It is closed from mid-November to after Christmas. Buckelwiesen 7, 82481 Mittenwald, ☎ 08823-1701, fax 08823-2907.

Camping

Camping Zugspitze is on the road to Grainau. It has many shady spots but can be noisy. Facilities are rather basic. There are 130 lots for tourists and 50 for long-term campers. Reservations are required in winter and it's open year-round. Griesener Straße 4, 82491 Garmisch-Grainau, ☎ 08821-3180, fax 08821-947-594.

Much more pleasant are the two campsites near Mittenwald. **Alpen Caravanpark Tennsee** is a five-star site with excellent facilities. It bills itself as the campsite with hotel flair. In winter, there is a shuttle bus to the ski areas. There are 267 lots and it's open from mid-December to early November. 82494 Mittenwlad-Klais-Krün, ☎ 08825-170, fax 08825-17-236, www.camping-tennsee.de.

Equally well located, only 1.8 miles outside Mittenwald, is **Naturcamping Isarhorn**. It's in a natural setting with excellent facilities. There are 200 lots for tourists and another 130 for long-term campers. It is open from mid-December to October. Isarhorn 4, 82481 Mittenwald, ☎ 08823-5216, fax 08823-8091, www.camping-mittenwald.de.

Several campsites are available in the Staffelsee region. Very popular is **Camping Insel Buchau** on an island in the Staffelsee Lake. It can only be reached by canoe or a few times per day on the lake boat. The site has just over 200 lots but the majority are for long-term campers. The site is open from mid-April to mid-October. Insel Buchau, 82418 Seehausen a. Staffelsee, ☎ 08841-9570, fax 08841-40-270, www.camping-insel.de.

Campingplatz Halbinsel Burg is beautifully located on a peninsula in the Staffelsee. It has 140 lots that book out early for the high season. The site is open from early January to late October. Burgweg 41, 82418 Seehausen, ☎ 08841-9870, fax 08841-626-071, www.murnau.de.

Campingplatz Aichalehof is on the west bank of the Staffelsee with direct access to the lake. It is a large site with over 400 lots and very good facilities. Open from May to September. 82449 Uffing am Staffelsee, ☎ 08846-211, fax 08846-914-633, www.aichalehof.de.

Upper Bavaria South of Munich

The area directly south of Munich is divided into various small tourist regions that include several lakes and valleys. For the short-term visitor it makes sense to focus on the Kochelsee Lake and the Tegernsee Lake areas. The region offers a mix of cultural sights and natural beauty, with numerous outdoor pursuits in all seasons. Most towns are easily reached from Munich and very popular with day-trippers.

Getting Around

The valleys south of Munich have good railway connections from the Bavarian capital but often the different valleys have no direct rail links to each other, requiring that you either change in Munich or close to Munich before setting out south again.

Bus services are available between Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Mittenwald, Murnau, Kochel, Bad Tölz, and the Tegernsee area to connect towns that are on different railway lines. However, note that frequency on weekends is often greatly reduced.

Kochel can be reached on the regular Deutsche Bahn railway network. At least hourly trains from Munich take just over an hour and usually require a transfer in Tutzing.

The private **Bayrische Oberlandbahn** (BOB), www.bayerische-oberlandbahn.de, has railway services from Munich to three valleys: Bad Tölz and Lenggries, Tegernsee, and Schliersee and Bayrischzell. A single train often departs from Munich but en route splits into as many as four trains, making it essential to get into the right car. Currently and for the foreseeable future, all Deutsche Bahn tickets and rail passes are accepted on these private lines.

Kochelsee

Kochelsee *(Luidger)*

The Kochelsee is an idyllically located lake, mostly in the flat moor landscape but with its southern banks already in the mountains. Even more spectacular is the Walchensee, which is 200 m/656 ft higher and a true Alpine lake completely encircled by the mountains. Both lakes have clean water that approaches and at times even exceeds drinking water specifications. Both lakes are cold but still good for watersports and the region is popular with both hikers and bikers. In addition to the natural surroundings, several cultural and historical sights are of interest.

Kochel is a small town of 4,000 inhabitants, of which only around half are permanent residents. The town's most famous hero is the Schmied von Kochel (Blacksmith of Kochel), a popular folk hero who led a peasant's revolt on Christmas Eve 1705, known as the Sendlinger Mordweihnacht, against the occupation of Bavaria by Austrian troops during the War of Spanish Succession. Armed only with crude farming implements, a few thousand peasants attacked the imperial troops in Munich. Most of the peasants were slaughtered even after they had surrendered. Although historical proof is scarce, legend had it that they were led by Balthasar Maier, a blacksmith trainee in Kochel. A statue in his honor graces Schmied-von-Kochel-Platz.

During the mid-19th century, Kochel briefly added "Bad" to the town name after sodium-rich springs were discovered. King Ludwig II and even Otto von Bismarck came to take to the waters but after a decade the spring dried up and the town went back to its small-town ways. Renowned Munich painter Franz Marc lived in the town prior to the First World War.

Information Sources

Tourist Info, Kalmbachstraße 11, 82431 Kochel am See, ☎ 08851-338, fax 08851-5588, www.kochel.de.

Sightseeing

Kochel am See

The main sight in Kochel am See is the **Franz Marc Museum**, Herzogstandweg 43, ☎ 08851-7114, www.franz-marc-museum.de. It is dedicated to the memory of Franz Marc (1880-1916) and other *Blaue Reiter* members who lived and visited Kochel in the years before World War I. Works by protagonists of the Classical Modern movement were recently added to the collection of around 150 Avant Garde Blaue Reiter paintings, drawings, and prints on display. Marc, who increasingly preferred rural life to the city scene of Munich, lived in the region for some years prior to buying a house in Kochel itself. (Not the house the museum is in!) Marc was arguably the most important Bavarian artist of the 20th century. In 1916, he died at the Battle of Verdun. (See *Murnau* for more on *Der Blaue Reiter*.)

Also worth seeing in the center of town is the **Pfarrkirche St Michael** (Parish Church) with its onion-domed tower. It was built in the late 17th century by Kaspar Feichtmayr while the rich stuccowork and frescoes are by local artists.

On the south bank of the lake is the **Erlebniskraftwerk Walchensee**, Altjoch 21, ☎ 08851-77-211, one of the largest water turbine power stations in Germany. It was built between 1918 and 1924 and uses the 200-m/656-ft drop from the Walchensee to the Kochelsee to produce 320 million kilowatt-hours annually of clean energy. The large transfer of water ensures that Kochelsee is colder than it normally would have been and that neither lake fully freezes over in winter. The information center is open daily from 9 am to 5 pm.

Großweil

One of the finest open-air museums in Bavaria is the **Freilichtmuseum an der Glentleiten**, 82439 Großweil, ☎ 08851-1850, www.glentleiten.de. It faithfully reconstructed over 40 farm-related buildings from the whole region and has numerous demonstrations of how a village was basically self-sufficient in previous centuries. Opening hours are early April to early November, Tuesday to Sunday from 9 am to 6 pm; July and August also open on Monday. Admission is €5. The museum is near the Autobahn A95 (exit Murnau/Kochel). A bus service is available from Murnau and Kochel from end May to mid-October.

Walchensee

In 1492, Duke Albrecht IV ordered the construction of the **Kesselbergstraße**, a route that connected Kochel and the Walchensee with the Mittenwald market that was then an important trading post of Venice. The original route, with inclines of up to 25%, was used until the late 19th century. In 1786, Goethe used this road on his famous trip to Italy, as a monument in Urfeld testifies. However, he still used the old road that is now a popular, if steep, hiking route. At six km/3.7 miles, the present road is double the length of the original and has 36 curves to overcome the 200-m/656-ft altitude difference.

Walchensee

The **Walchensee** is a true Alpine lake completely surrounded by thickly forested mountains. The deep-blue water is cold but the lake is more popular than the Kochelsee with watersports enthusiasts. The main attraction is the reliable and strong winds that usually blow from around noon to late afternoon.

The 1,731-m/5,680-ft **Herzogstand** is a popular hiking destination, with marvelous views of both lakes and all the way to Munich if the weather is clear enough. A cable car is an easy way to get close to the top.

Benediktbeuern

Benediktbeuern, eight km/five miles north of Kochel, is famous for its monastery as well as the *Carmina Burana*. The original Benedictine monastery was established here in 739 and is thus one of the oldest in Bavaria and the first of the order north of the Alps.

The Late Baroque **Basilika**, Don-Bosco-Straße 1, ☎ 08857-692--890, with its two onion-domed towers, was erected in 1682 to designs of Kaspar Feichtmayr. It has some fine Italian-style stuccowork but the frescoes by Hans Georg Asam are a highlight. The adjacent two-story, oval **Anastasiekapelle** (Chapel) is a Bavarian Rococo masterpiece. It was built in 1750-53 by Johann Michael Fischer; Johann Michael Feichtmayr did the stuccowork and main altar while Johann

Benediktbeuern interior *(Fb78)*

Jakob Zeiller painted the frescoes. It was a good practice round – the trio went from here to produce the enormous church for the Ottobeuren monastery (see *Lower Allgäu*). Opening hours are daily from 8 am to 5 pm.

The **monastery buildings** erected from 1669-1732 have been used since 1930 by the Salesian Order of St John Bosco, Don-Bosco-Straße 1, 83671 Benediktbeuern, ☎ 08857-880, www.kloster-benediktbeuern.de. Parts of the monastery, such as the cloisters and the refectory (the former library), are open at no charge from 9 am to 5:30 pm. Most of the monastery, including the Alter Festsaal (Old Banqueting Hall) and Kürfürstensaal (Elector's Assembly Hall), can only be seen on guided tours. Tours are on weekends year-round at 2:30 pm and additionally at 11 am from mid-April to mid-October. From July to early October, tours are daily at 2:30 pm. They cost €3.

CARMINA BURANA

In the mid-19th century a set of 12th- and 13th-century manuscripts were discovered among the works from Benediktbeuern that had been acquired by the National Library in Munich following secularization in 1803. These poems, some 240 of them now known as the *Carmina Burana* (or Goliardic songs), are secular in nature and some are even anti-religious parodies of church ceremonies. Others are rowdy drinking songs. The poems probably originated south of the Alps and were almost certainly not written in Benediktbeuern itself. In the 1930s, some were famously set to music by Bavarian composer Carl Orff and frequently feature in films and advertisements. They are performed in the monastery grounds during summer.

Cultural Events

Musiksommer Loisachtal, Waldhauserstraße 1a, 82547 Beuerberg, ☎ 08179-8725, www.musiksommerloisachtal.de, arranges a program of classical music in the Bad Tölz region. Concerts are held in various venues such as Kloster Benediktbeuren and, contrary to what the name suggests, not only in summer.

The **ZUK - Zentrum für Umwelt und Kultur**, Maierhof, 83671 Benediktbeuren, ☎ 08857-88-704, www.zuk-bb.de, arranges various cultural events in Benediktbeuren. Particularly popular are the open-air concerts held in July in a courtyard of the monastery. Orff's *Carmina Burana* is always on the program.

Adventures on Foot

Countryside Hikes

The geography of the area allows for easy hikes in the relatively flat moorland north of the Alps or more challenging ones in the mountains. An easy 14-km/8.7-ft circular route from **Kochel to Benediktbeuern** goes one-way through the forest and returns via the moors.

More challenging routes are on the 1,731-m/5,680-ft **Herzogstand** between the Kochel and Walchensee. The assault on the peak can be started from the Kochelsee or from various points along the Walchensee. The most popular route from Urfeld takes around three hours. On a clear day, views from the top stretch all the way to Munich. The Herzogstandbahn cable car can, of course, shorten and simplify the walk tremendously, although it is still a good 30-minute hike from the mountain station to the top of the peak.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

The flat area north of the Kochelsee makes for easy cycling. An easy 30-km/19-mile circular route from Kochel through the moors and via Benediktbeuren allows for fine mountain views without any inclines. It is also possible to cycle around the Walchensee – the 30-km/19-mile route is flat and closely follows the edge of the lake.

A more challenging mountain bike tour goes from Benediktbeuren through the mountains before turning back near Bad Tölz. It is 34 km/21 miles long with a 400-m/1,312-ft altitude difference.

Bicycles can be rented in **Kochel** from **Fam. Heinritzi**, Bahnhofstraße 8, ☎ 08851-471, or **Tauchschule**, Graseckstraße 34, ☎ 08851-1750; along the **Walchensee** from **Brunn**, ☎ 08858-261, or **Asenstorfer**, Urfeld, ☎ 08851-363; and in **Benediktbeuren** from **Aichbichler Sophie**, Häusernstraße 13, ☎ 08857-722.

Adventures in the Air

Cable Cars

HERZOGSTAND BAHN
2

The **Herzogstandbahn**, Am Tanneneck 6, 82432 Walchensee, ☎ 08858-236, www.herzogstandbahn.de, is a cable car that operates from the banks of the Welchensee to 100 m/328 ft below the peak of the Herzogstand. The views are fantastic and several hiking routes are available in the region. Round-trips are €12.50.

Adventures on Water

Sailing & Wind Surfing

The **Walchensee** is famous for its winds that tend to blow in the afternoon due to air pressure and the thermal effects caused by temperature changes between day and night. The winds are less reliable on warm summer days. Winds start from the north at Urfeld and reach the southern shores more than an hour later.

Sail boats can be rented from **Rumiz**, Einsiedl, ☎ 08858-477, or **Asenstorfer**, Urfeld, ☎ 08851-363. Windsurfers are available from **Windsurfcenter Walchensee**, Seestraße 10, 82432 Walchensee.

Lakeboats

Motorschiffahrt Kochelsee, Kirchenweg 1, ☎ 08851-416, www.motorschiffahrt-kochelsee.de, operates four daily cruises on the Kochelsee from mid-May to mid-September. The same company rents out electric, pedal, and row boats by the hour without reservations from the Seepromenade.

Spas

The odds are stacked against Kochel's claims to be a spa town. The mineral springs dried up more than a century ago and the water of the lake is positively cold. However, the **Trimini**, Seeweg 2, ☎ 08851-5300, is a large swimming pool complex with a wide range of pools, saunas, and slides. It is open daily in summer from 9 am to 8 pm and Tuesday to Sunday in winter from 10 am to 8 pm. Admission is €5 for 90 minutes and €9 for the full day.

Trimini

Where to Stay & Eat

Seehotel Grauer Bär has a lovely location south of town on the banks of the lake. Rooms are comfortably furnished using ample natural wood. Many have balconies and lake views. The hotel has a private beach and free rowboats and bicycles for guests' use. The **restaurant** (€€) has a terrace with lake views and serves mostly local cuisine including lake fish. Mittenwalderstraße 82-86, 82431 Kochel, ☎ 08851-92-500, fax 08851-925-015, www.grauer-baer.de. (‡€-€€€)

☞ For hotel and restaurant price codes, see pages 50 and 52.

Hotel Gasthof zur Post

Hotel Gasthof *zur* Post is in the heart of the town, as one would expect from a hotel in a former post office dating from 1356. Rooms are furnished in a country-house style. The rustic **restaurant** (€€) is famous for its Bavarian cuisine, which includes venison, fish, and some of the best *Weißwürste* in the region. Schmied-von-Kochel-Platz 4, 82431 Kochel, ☎ 08851-92-410, fax 08851-924-150, www.posthotel-kochel.de. (€€)

Hotel Restaurant Schmied von Kochel is a typical Bavarian building with numerous balconies sporting flower pots in summer. Rooms are cozy and functionally furnished in typical Bavarian style. The **restaurant** (€€) with beer garden received numerous awards for its Bavarian cuisine but also has a wide range of international dishes on the menu. Schlehdorfer Straße 6, Koche, ☎ 08851-9010, fax 08851-7331, www.schmied-von-kochel.de. (€€)

Alpengasthof Hotel Rabenkopf is six km/3.7 miles from Kochel in the small town of Ried near Benediktbeuren. It has an unpretentious **restaurant** (€€) serving excellent Bohemian and Viennese cuisine at very reasonable prices. A few simple rooms are also available. Kocheler Straße 23, 82431 Ried bei Kochel, ☎ 08857-208, fax 08857-9167, www.rabenkopf.de. (€-€€)

The **Gästehaus der Salesianer Don Boscos** is a guesthouse run by the Benediktbeuern monastery. Rooms are functionally furnished and not all have private bathrooms. Participation in religious programs is optional. Don-Bosco-Straße 1, 83671 Benediktbeuern, ☎ 08857-88-195, fax 08857-88-139, www.kloster-benediktbeuern.de. (€-€€)

The **Klosterbräustüberl**, Zeiler Weg 2, Benediktbeuern, ☎ 08857-9407, will make a trip to Benediktbeuern worth the effort for even those not remotely interested in religion or Baroque art. The food is mostly regional, served in either the pleasant beer garden or the traditional tavern. Prices are very reasonable. The beer garden has free live music from May to end September on Sunday at 10:30 am and 2:30 pm. Despite the name, beer has not been brewed in the monastery since the 1920s! (€-€€)

Youth Hostel

DJH Kochel is the smallest youth hostel in Bavaria with only 31 beds. It has a convenient location close to the lake and can be reached in 10 minutes walk from the station. It is closed from mid-December to end January. Badstraße 2, 82431 Kochel am See, ☎ 08851-5296, fax 08851-7019.

DJH Urfeld is beautifully located on the banks of the Walchensee with wonderful views of the Alps. It is closed from mid-November to after Christmas. The RVO bus from Kochel to Garmisch-Partenkirchen stops in front of the hostel. Mittenwalder Straße 17, 82432 Walchensee, ☎ 08851-230, fax 08851-1022.

DJH Benediktbeuern JH Miriam is only 100 m/328 ft from the railway station, near the monastery. It is closed from mid-December to mid-January. Bahnhofstraße 58, 83671 Benediktbeuern, ☎ 08857-9050, fax 08857-694-680.

The second-oldest youth hostel in Bendiktbeuren is in the monastery itself and is operated by the Salesian order. **Don Bosco Jugendherberge**, Don Bosco Straße 3, 83671 Benediktbeuern, ☎ 08857-88-350, fax 08857-88-351, www.don-bosco-jh.de, is usually booked out by school groups but if a bed is available, no one will be turned away.

Camping

Campingplatz Renken has direct access to the Kochelsee Lake. It has only 70 lots and is open from April to October. Mittenwalder Straße 106, 82431 Kochel am See, ☎ /fax 08851-5776.

Campingplatz Kesselberg is beautifully located on the southern bank of the Kochelsee. It has 120 lots and is open from April to October. 82431 Kochel, ☎/fax 08851-464.

Tegernsee-Schliersee-Wendelstein

The somewhat clumsily named Tegernsee-Schliersee-Wendelstein area sums up in the name the main sights. The Tegernsee is a beautifully located lake very popular with day-trippers from Munich, including the moneyed elite who love to congregate in the small town of Rottach-Egern. Nearby Schliersee is smaller and generally draws fewer visitors despite its equally beautiful location. The even smaller Spitzingsee is a true Alpine lake. The Wendelstein peak near Bayrischzell has some of the finest views in Germany.

The whole region is a year-round tourist destination. Hiking, cycling, and watersports are popular in summer, while winter sports include cross-country and downhill skiing as well as Germany's longest toboggan run. Cultural sights are limited and very low key.

Information Sources

Tourismusverband Bayerisches Oberland, Tegernsee-Schliersee – Wendelstein, Tegernseer Straße 20a, 83734 Hausham, ☎ 08026-920-700, fax 08026-924-166, www.tegernsee-schliersee-wendelstein.de.

Tegernsee

The Tegernsee Lake is one of the loveliest in Bavaria. It is only six km/3.7 miles long and at most two km/1.2 miles wide, but it's surrounded by mountains on three sides. Cultural sights are limited but it's very popular on weekends with day-trippers who enjoy the lake, hiking in the mountains, and some very exclusive restaurants and hotels.

Four main towns are on the banks of the lake. **Gmund** in the far north has good transportation connections. **Tegernsee** is on the east bank and is the main center of tourism, while **Rottach-Egern** on the south is by far the smartest and a favorite refuge of the rich and famous from Munich. **Bad Wiessee** on the west bank has spa facilities and a casino and is popular especially with older travelers.

The water quality of the lake is very good but temperatures barely rise above 20°C/68°F in summer. Much of the lake bank is in private hands but several beaches provide access, especially on the southern shores.

Information

Tourist Information, Hauptstraße 2, 83684 Tegernsee, ☎ 08022-180-140, www.tegernsee.de.

Getting Around

RVO buses circle the lake in both directions at least hourly in around an hour. Additional buses run from Gmund via Bad Wiessee to Tegernsee town. Frequent buses are also available to Schliersee, Spitzingsee, and Bayrischzell.

Tegernsee Town

Tegernsee is historically the most important of the small towns that line the banks of the lake. During the mid-eighth century, the Bavarian nobility opened a Benedictine monastery here that at one stage controlled almost 12,000 farms from Swabia to Tirol. During the 15th century, its library exceeded that of even the Vatican in quantity and quality. Following secularization in 1803, the Bavarian king bought the monastery and had it remodeled in a neo-Classical style by Leo von Klenze.

The **Schloss** (Palace), Schlossplatz 1, still belongs to the Wittelsbach family, who also run the very popular tavern and brewery. Most of the palace is off-limits but the **Pfarrkirche St Quirin** (Parish Church), ☎ 08022-4640, in the palace is open. It has 11th-century, Romanesque foundations, but the main structure is 15th-century Gothic. Von Klenze lowered the twin towers to fit in with his neo-Classical alteration of the original monastery. The interior is Baroque, with frescoes by Hans Georg Asam.

Schloss, Tegernsee *(Luidger)*

Rottach-Egern

Historically, Rottach-Egern came far behind Tegernsee town in importance but, since the 19th century, this small town has developed into a posh village with many well-heeled visitors from Munich and beyond. The town is full of exclusive and expensive restaurants and hotels. It is often claimed, and only partly in jest, that the variety of boutiques here is equal to what is available on the smartest shopping streets in Munich. On summer weekends, this town has the highest concentration of expensive automobiles in Bavaria.

Culturally the town is famous as having been the residence of two important Bavarian writers, **Ludwig Thoma** (1867-1921) and **Ludwig Ganghofer** (1855-1920). Neither is well known outside the German-speaking world. Their graves at the St Laurentius church are very popular with German visitors but most foreigners would rather head for the lake or the mountains.

A popular excursion is to the **Wallberg** (1,722m/5,650 ft) with the best views of the lake and a favored spot for hang- and paragliding. A cable car takes the strain out of ascending the mountain. A toll road (Mautstraße, €3 per car, closed in winter) goes to 1,100 m/3,600 ft, from where it is still a good 90 minutes hike to the top.

Bad Wiessee

Bad Wiessee on the west bank is mainly visited for its spa facilities. Iodine- and sulphur-rich springs were discovered in the early 20th century and the spa guests have been coming ever since. The average age of visitors here is significantly older than in other towns along the lake.

The other attraction in town is the **Spielbank** (Casino), Winner 1, 83707 Bad Wiessee, ☎ 08022-98-350, www.spielbanken-bayern.de. It is in an ultra-modern building and operates under the same rules as other casinos in Bavaria: no one under 21 and jacket-and-tie requirements for men. The tables are open daily from 3 pm to 3 am and the slot machines from noon to 2:30 am. Admission is €2.50.

Schliersee

Tourist Office

Gäste-Information Schliersee, Bahnhofstraße 11a, 83727 Schliersee, ☎ 08026-60-650, www.schliersee.de.

Sightseeing

Schliersee Lake is clearly smaller than the Tegernsee but just as beautifully located. On weekends, it can get as crowded as its neighbor, but generally draws fewer visitors and prices are also slightly lower. The lake is only 2½ km/1.6 miles long and at most 1.2 km/0.75 miles wide. It is also only half the depth of the Tegernsee and thus often a few degrees warmer in summer.

Pfarrkirche St Sixtus *(Rufus46)*

The main town on the lake is **Schliersee** with just over 6,000 inhabitants. The town is pleasant and pretty despite being dominated by a modern and not too attractive spa center. The monastery that developed here during the eighth century never achieved the same fame or wealth of the one in Tegernsee.

The **Rathaus** (Town Hall) is in essence from the late 15th century but received its present appearance only after the First World War. The **Pfarrkirche St Sixtus** (Parish Church) is mostly from the 18th century but has a Late Gothic tower. Much of the interior, including the main altar, stuccowork, and frescoes, are early works of Johann Baptist Zimmermann.

Spitzingsee

Although only a kilometer/half-mile long and 400 m/1,312 ft wide, the Spitzingsee is at an altitude of 1,100 m/3,600 ft and is the largest of Bavaria's true Alpine lakes. It is completely surrounded by mountains and mostly visited for watersports, hiking, and winter sports. Although the water quality is excellent, the high altitude ensures that the water temperature is even colder than that of the Schliersee.

Bayrischzell

Tourist Office

Tourist Information, Kirchplatz 2, 83735 Bayrischzell, ☎ 08023-648, www.bayrischzell.de.

Sightseeing

Bayrischzell is one of Bavaria's prettiest towns. It is beautifully located in the mountains and all buildings seem to be in the Bavarian Alpine style. This is a true village, with few attractions other than the town panorama and the outdoor opportunities that the Alps offer in both summer and winter.

The nearby 1,838-m/6,030-ft **Wendelstein** is a popular destination. It has some of the best views in Germany, with clear weather panoramas from the Allgäu to Berchtesgaden. A cable car or cog railway make for easy ascents.

Bayrischzell (Kogo)

Cultural Events

Bad Wiessee, Tegernsee, and Schliersee have frequent Kurkonzerte (spa concerts) with lively music. Baroque music is often performed in the Tegernsee Schloss.

Festivals

The **Tegernseer Woche** is held end September, early October. It is a week-long cultural festival and a good opportunity to see traditional costumes, folk dances, and other local customs.

Shopping

Rottach-Egern is a good town for buying exclusive fashion and jewelry. The selection is vast and many claim it compares well with what is available in Munich. Most boutiques are in **Hauptstraße** and **Seestraße**.

Adventures on Foot

Countryside Hikes

A pleasant hike with great views is from Schlossplatz in Tegernsee to the **Grosses Paraplui** in the hills above town. During the 19th century, Bavarian royals entertained guests, including foreign dignitaries, here. The present pavilion is a copy of the original.

Numerous guided walks in the mountains and along the lakes are arranged by the tourist information offices in the region. The one in **Bad Wiessee** is particularly active but all can provide details. These hikes are generally easy.

It is an easy seven-km/4.3-mile hike around the **Schliersee**. The path is mostly within sight of the lake and can be done in less than two hours. Around the **Spitzingsee** is even faster – the three-km/1.9-mile hike can be done in less than an hour. Hikes in the mountains are numerous, with the cable car's mountain stations often the start of walks with spectacular views.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Many tourist offices arrange guided cycling tours. These are generally easy and information can be obtained from any tourist office in the region.

Bicycle rentals are available in virtually all towns in the region including in **Tegernsee** town from **Bertls Bikeshop**, Kurgarten, ☎ 08022-65-428; in **Rottach-Egern** from **Zweirad Stemmer**, Karl-Theodor-Straße 69, ☎ 08022-65-288; in **Bad Wiessee** from **Fahrrad Schmid**, Dr.-Scheid-Straße 19, ☎ 08022-83-619, or **Bikepark**, Adrian-Stoop-Straße 28, ☎ 08022-664-487; in **Schliersee** from **Vespa Lammel**, Miesbacher Straße 30, ☎ 08026-94-449, or **Radsport Rebel**, Miesbacher Straße 12, ☎ 08026-2727.

Adventures in the Air

Cable Cars

The **Wallberg-Kabinenbahn** (cable car), ☎ 08022-705-370, www.wallbergbahn.de, takes visitors up in less than 15 minutes to 1,622 m/5,322 ft. Round-trips are €15. From here, it is a good 30-minute hike to the 1,722-m/5,650-ft peak. In winter, Germany's longest toboggan run and a very challenging downhill ski run are major attractions.

The 1,838-m/6,030-ft **Wendelstein** has some of the finest views in Germany and this view is easy, though not cheap, to obtain. King Maximilian II scaled the mountain in four hours in 1858. The modern-day visitor can use the **Seilbahn** (cable car) to climb 932 m/3,060 ft in seven minutes and then hike the last 120 m/394 ft to the top in around 30 minutes. An alternative is the historical **Zahnradbahn** (cogwheel train) that covers the distance in 30 minutes. The cable car departs from the Schliersee-Bayrischzell road, while the train departs from the opposite side of the mountain near Brannenburg. Both are operated by **Wendelsteinbahn**, Kerschelweg 30, 83098 Brannenburg, ☎ 08034-3080, www.wendelsteinbahn.de, and combinations of cable car and train are popular. Round-trips on the cable car are €18, on the train €25, and a combination is €24.50 (or €28 including the bus back to the other side of the mountain).

Hot Air Ballooning

Hot-air balloon flights can be booked through **Ballooning Tegernsee**, Am Riedlerberg 19, 83708 Kreuth, ☎ 08029-1221, or through the **Tourist Information Bad Wiessee**, Adrian-Stoop-Straße 20, 83707 Bad Wiessee, ☎ 08022-860-321.

Paragliding

Passagierflug Wallberg, Rißeckstraße 5, 83727 Schliersee, ☎ 08026-920-9820, www.doppelsitzerflug.de, does tandem paragliding flights from the Wallberg.

Adventures on Water

Boating & Sailing

Boats, including rowing and electric boats, can be rented without reservations from many towns along the lake. In **Tegernsee** town they are available from Café am See or the Schlosscafé, in **Rottach-Egern** from the promenade in Seestraße, in **Schliersee** from in front of the Kurhaus, and along the southern bank of the **Spitzingsee** near Kiosk St Bernard.

Windsurfers can be rented from **Sport Berauer**, Rathausstraße 17, Schliersee, ☎ 08026-60-690.

Lake Boats

On the **Tegernsee**, boats operate year-round if the weather allows, with numerous daily departures for the greater (one-hour) or smaller (30-minute) tours. The boats stop in all the main towns but have only limited capacity for bicycles. Boats operate on the **Schliersee** from June to September with several 45-minute cruises daily.

Adventures on Snow

Skiing

Numerous cross-country skiing trails crisscross the region but, for Alpine skiing, it is best to head to either the Spritzingsee or Bayrischzell.

Bayrischzell has over 100 km/60 miles of cross-country trails and 50 km/30 miles of downhill runs in three main areas. The famous **Wendelstein area** has several runs rated medium or difficult. However, all require a very difficult start unsuitable for the inexperienced from the top station of the cable car or cogwheel train station. A day pass is €25.50.

The **Sudefeld area**, www.sudelfeld.de, has three chairlifts and 18 ski lifts. More than two-thirds of the 31 km/19 miles of runs here are medium, while only three km/1.9 miles are rated difficult. A day pass is €25.

The **Geitau area**, www.skilift-geitau.de, is small but has easy slopes and is very popular with families and those learning to ski or snowboard. A day pass is €11.50.

Ski rentals are available in Bayrischzell from **Skischule Bayrischzell**, Am Haus des Gastes, ☎ 08023-791, www.skischule-bayrischzell.de, and from **Skischule Sudelfeld**, Schlierseer Straße 3, ☎ 08023-514, www.skischule-sudelfeld.de.

The **Spitzingsee area** has 25 km/15 miles of downhill runs. A cable car, two chairlifts, and 13 ski lifts assure a smooth flow of skiers into the mountains. A day pass is €25. The following ski schools also rent out equipment: **Snowcamp Martina Loch**, Talstation Stümpflingbahn Spitzingsee, ☎ 08026-71-924, www.snowcamp-martina-loch.de, or **Skischule Spitzingsee**, Kurvenlift Spitzingsee, ☎ 08026-7662, www.skischule-spitzingsee.de.

A challenging 3.2-km/two-mile run is from the top station of the **Wallbergbahn** near Rottach-Egern. It is not actively maintained and thus only suitable for experienced free-style skiers.

Tobogganing

Germany's longest toboggan run, 6½ km/four miles, is from the top station of the **Wallbergbahn** near Rottach-Egern. It is long but not particularly challenging and is suitable for families.

Where to Stay & Eat

Tegernsee Lake Region

The three main towns on the Tegernsee have a wealth of good, mostly pricey hotels and restaurants. Each of the three towns has a Michelin star restaurant, confirming that this lake is the playground of Munich's rich and famous. There is no way that these towns of less than 7,000 inhabitants each can support such variety and quality on local trade alone.

☞ For hotel and restaurant price codes, see pages 50 and 52.

Tegernsee Town

Hotel Bayern combines four buildings on a hill overlooking the town and lake. Rooms are large and stylishly furnished. Rooms with lake views are more expensive but, given the view, they book out faster. A wide range of wellness facilities are available. The stylish **TegernSeh** (€€-€€€) has a small but varied menu and fantastic views. Neureuthstraße 23, 83684 Tegernsee, ☎ 08022-1820, fax 08022-182-100, www.hotel-bayern.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Hotel Bayern

Hotel Bischoff am See has one of Bavaria's top gourmet **restaurants**, with excellent service and a Michelin star (€€€-€€€€), offering a variety of local, European, and Asian food in a stylish setting with fine lake views. The rooms are similarly luxurious and furnished according to feng shui principles. The hotel has direct access to the lake and is south of Tegernsee, only five minutes walk from the center of Rottach-Egern. Schwaighofstraße 53, 83684 Tegernsee, ☎ 08022-3966, fax 08022-1720. www.bischoff-am-see.de. (€€€€)

The **Bräustüberl**, Schlossplatz 1, ☎ 08022-4141, is part of the Schloss and hugely popular. Bus parties tend to hog it during the day, but at night more locals can be found here too. The atmosphere is jolly but less noisy than, say, the Hofbräuhaus in Munich. Only simple, typical Bavarian tavern meals are served. (€-€€)

Rottach-Egern

The **Sofitel Tegernsee Seehotel Überfahrt** is a luxury hotel in the grand tradition. The hotel was completely renovated in 2001 and has very large, luxuriously furnished rooms. A range of spa facilities complements the direct lake access. The stylish **Egerner Bucht** (€€€) serves Euro-Asian cuisine. The **Bayernstube** (€€-€€€) is more rustic, with local cuisine, while the **Brasserie** (€-€€) serves light meals from its regional and international menu. Überfahrtstrasse 10, 83700

Sofitel Tegernsee Seehotel Überfahrt

Rottach-Egern, ☎ 08022-6690, fax 08022-669-2000, www.sofitel.com. (€€€€)

The luxury **Hotel Bachmair am See** is the traditional meeting place of the rich and famous. The hotel complex consists of several buildings and in addition to the spa facilities has its own park and upscale nightclub. Rooms are luxurious and furnished with fine attention to detail. The gourmet **Panorama Restaurant** (€€€) serves international nouvelle cuisine from its open kitchen, while more regional fare is available in the rustic, traditional tavern **Bayrische Stub'n** (€€). Seestraße 47, 83700 Rottach-Egern, ☎ 08022-2720, fax 08022-272-790, www.bachmair.de. (€€€€)

The Dichterstube

The **Park-Hotel Egerner Hof** is the third luxury lakeside option in this small town but the number-one choice for gourmets. Rooms are large and stylishly decorated, with modern, upmarket country house-style furniture. Several apartments, villas, and mountain huts are also available in the complex. The wellness area is large and offers many treatments. The Michelin-star **Dichterstube** (€€€-€€€€) is a luxurious, wood-paneled gourmet restaurant considered by many to be the best in the region. It serves nouvelle cuisine with strong Mediterranean influences. The more rustic **Hubertstüberl** (€€-€€€) offers upmarket regional cuisine. Aribostraße 19–25, 83700 Rottach-Egern, ☎ 08022-6660, fax 08022-666-200, www.egerner-hof.de. (€€€€)

A pleasant and reasonably priced option in this generally expensive town is **Gästehaus Haltmair am See**. Rooms are individually decorated with country-house-style furniture and careful attention to details. Apartments with kitchens and holiday homes are also available. Seestraße 35, 83700 Rottach-Egern, ☎ 08022-2750, fax 08022-27-564, www.haltmair.de. (€€-€€€)

Bad Wiessee

Romantik Hotel Landhaus Wilhelmy is in a quiet location with pleasant, stylishly furnished rooms. All have balconies. The **restaurant** (€€) serves seasonal dishes and is only open to houseguests. Freihausstraße 15, 83707 Bad Wiessee, ☎ 08022-98-680, fax 08022-986-8233, www.romantik-hotel.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Hotel Lederer am See has four typical Bavarian buildings spread through a huge park directly on the banks of the lake. Rooms are comfortably furnished and most have balconies and unobstructed lake views. The **restaurant** (€€) has lake views and serves local and international cuisine. Bodenschneidstraße 9-11, 83707 Bad Wiessee, ☎ 08022-8290, fax 08022-829-200, www.lederer.com. (€€€-€€€€)

Hotel Lederer am See

Hotel-Restaurant Am Sonnenbichl is in a typical Alpine-style building. It is in a quiet spot high above the town and lake in a meadow some distance from any through-traffic. Rooms are homey and comfortably furnished in warm colors. The true highlight is the Michelin-star **Patrizierhof** (€€€) that serves nouvelle cuisine in stylish surroundings. Regional cuisine is available in the more rustic **Bauernstube** (€€). Sonnenbichl 1, 83707 Bad Wiessee, ☎ 08022-98-730, fax 08022-8940, www.amsonnenbichl.de. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Landhaus Midas is in town, yet quiet. Rooms are functionally furnished with all modern comforts. Setzbergstraße 12, 83707 Bad Wiessee, ☎ 08022-81-150, fax 08022-99-577, www.landhaus-midas.de. (€€)

Freihaus Brenner, Freihaus 4, ☎ 08022-82-004, www.freihaus-brenner.de, is a gourmet restaurant with a spectacular setting high above Bad Wiessee – the approach road is at a 20% incline. The building has several levels, including the cozy, wood-paneled, low-ceiling main restaurant, and terraces with fabulous views. The food is mostly nouvelle cuisine with an emphasis on upmarket regional and seasonal dishes. (€€-€€€)

Freihaus Brenner

Schliersee

Arabella Sheraton Alpenhotel

By far the best hotel in the Schliersee region is the **Arabella Sheraton Alpenhotel** am Spitzingsee, 10 km/six miles deeper into the mountains on the banks of the small Spitzingsee. The luxurious rooms are large and furnished in a modern country-house style. A huge range of wellness options and spa treatments are available. The stylish **König-Ludwig-Stube** (€€-€€€) serves upmarket local and international cuisine, while the **Osteria L'Oliva** (€€) has Italian food with an emphasis on Tuscan dishes. Seeweg 7, 83727 Spitzingsee, ☎ 08026-7980, fax 08026-798-879, www.arabellasheraton.com. (€€€€)

The **Seehotel Schlierseer Hof** is on the banks of the lake with its own private beach and boat landing. Rooms are comfortably and individually furnished to a high standard. Most have balconies; all have fine views either of the lake or the mountains. The **Panorama Restaurant** (€€) has views of the lake and serves regional and international cuisine. The **Kaminstube** (€-€€) is more cozy and serves more traditional fare. Seestraße 21, 83727 Schliersee, ☎ 08026-929-200, fax 08026-929-2050, www.schlierseerhof.de. (€€-€€€€)

Gästehaus Lechner am See is a small 11-room hotel directly on the banks of the lake. Rooms are functionally furnished and comfortable. Natural wood brings warmth to this typical Alpine-style building. Seestraße 33, 83727 Schliersee, ☎ 08026-94-380, fax 08026-943-899, www.gaestehaus-lechner.com. (€€)

A good choice for fine regional cuisine is **Sachs**, Neuhauser Straße 12, ☎ 08026-7238. It is in a typical Alpine house four km/2½ miles south of Schliersee en route to the Spitzingsee. Pizza and pasta are also available at night. (€-€€€)

Bayrischzell

Der Alpenhof is a luxury hotel in an Alpine villa. Rooms are large and individually furnished to very high standards. The suites range in style from classical Italian to Japanese and Bavarian. A range of spa and fitness facilities is available on-site. The very stylish **Alpenstube** (€€€) is a Michelin-star gourmet restaurant that serves mostly nouvelle cuisine. Upmarket regional cuisine is available in the **Bauernstube** (€€),

Der Alpenhof

while the **Weinstube**, with over 400 varieties of wine, reminds one of the hotel's early-20th-century origins as a wine cellar. Osterhofen 1, 83735 Bayrischzell, ☎ 08023-90-650, fax 08023-906-520, www.der-alpenhof.de. (€€€€)

Hotel Gasthof Wendelstein is in a typical Bavarian-Alpine building. Rooms are functionally furnished, in part with painted furniture, but reasonably comfortable. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves mostly local cuisine. Portions can be huge. Ursprungstraße 1, 83735 Bayrischzell, ☎ 08023-80-890, fax 08023-808-969, www.gasthof-wendelstein.de. (€€)

■ Youth Hostels

The **DJH Kreuth am Tegernsee** is a few miles into the mountains from Egern-Rottach. The bus from Tegernsee to Scharling stops near the hostel. It is closed from mid-November to after Christmas. Nördliche Hauptstraße 91, 83708 Kreuth am Tegernsee, ☎ 08029-99-560, fax 08029-995-629.

The **DJH Schliersee** is beautifully located in the small community of Josephsthal in the mountains en route to the Spitzingsee. It can be reached by bus from the stations in Schliersee or Fischhausen-Neuhaus. It is closed from November until after Christmas. Josefsthaler Straße 19, 83727 Schliersee, ☎ 08026-97-380, fax 08026-71-610.

■ Camping

Camping Wallberg has a lovely location between Bad Wiessee and Rottach-Egern. The 250-lot site has very good facilities. It is open year-round. Rainerweg 10, 83696 Weißach am Tegernsee, ☎ 08022-5371, fax 08022-670-274, www.campingplatz-wallberg.de.

Campingplatz Lido is beautifully located directly on the banks of the Schliersee. Facilities are a bit old fashioned but in fine working order. It has 170 lots and is open from April to September. Westerberstraße 27, 83727 Schliersee, ☎/fax 08026-6624, www.camping-lido.de.

Eastern Upper Bavaria

The eastern part of Upper Bavaria is divided into a number of tourist regions that can be reduced to the Inn Valley, the area around the

Chiemsee Lake, and Berchtesgadener Land. The **Inn Valley** has the lovely Old Town of **Wasserburg**, as well as the pilgrimage destination of **Altötting**, often called a Bavarian Lourdes. The Chiemsee is Bavaria's largest lake and most famous for the opulent **Palace Herrenchiemsee**, a Versailles-copy erected by Ludwig II on one of the islands in the lake. Nowhere is Bavaria more beautiful than in the area around **Berchtesgaden**. This triangular region penetrates deep into Austria and is surrounded by the Alps. It is as popular now as it was in the 1930s when the Nazi leaders poached much of the area for their holiday retreats.

The Inn Valley

The source of the Inn River is in Switzerland, from where it flows through Austria before its confluence with the Danube in Passau. At that stage, the Inn is actually a larger stream and, at 517 km/321 miles, is longer than the Danube. But history dictates that the rest of the river from Passau to the Black Sea is known as the Danube rather than the Inn. The river is at its fullest in May, when it carries a volume three times that of April.

In contrast to the Alpine valley of the Inn in Switzerland and Austria, the Inn Valley in Bavaria is mostly wide and hilly rather than mountainous. Interesting sights in Upper Bavaria include the almost intact medieval Old Town of Wasserburg, the pilgrims' town Altötting, and Burghausen with the longest castle in Europe on the Salzach, a major contributory of the Inn.

Information Sources

Tourismusgemeinschaft Inn-Salzach, Kapellplatz 2a, 84503 Altötting, ☎ 08671-506-228, fax 08671-85-858, www.inn-salzach.com.

SÜDOSTBAYERN-TICKET

The Südostbayern-Ticket allows unlimited use of local trains on the Südostbayern network, which includes basically all trains between Landshut and Salzburg, Passau and Rosenheim. It is valid from Markt Schwaben or Ebersberg near Munich but not from the Bavarian capital itself; nor is it valid on the direct route from Rosenheim to Salzburg. It costs €11 per day and is valid all day on weekends and after 9 am on weekdays. Bicycles and children under six ride for free.

Getting Around

At least hourly trains run from Munich to Altötting and Burghausen – all require a transfer in Mühldorf, with the total journey around two hours. A different line goes to Wasserburg and requires transfers in either Rosenheim or Grafing. Frequent trains run in the Inn Valley, with Rosenheim and Mühldorf the main transfer stations.

Wasserburg

Wasserburg am Inn's main attraction is its beautiful location on a promontory inside a sharp horseshoe bend of the Inn River. The Old Town is thus enclosed on three sides by the river and has fine samples of typical Inn-Salzach architecture.

Tourist Information

Gäste-Information im Rathaus, Marienplatz 2, 83512 Wasserburg am Inn, ☎ 08071-10-522, www.wasserburg.de.

Sightseeing

Good views of the Old Town panorama of Wasserburg are from the **Innbrücke** (Inn Bridge) or even better from the hill on the opposite bank of the Inn. Follow directions to "*Zur Schönen Aussicht*" from the bridge – it is a 15-minute hike to the top, or by car continue along Salzburger Straße.

Wasserburg

From the bridge, enter the Old Town through the Gothic **Brucktor** (Bridge Gate), with wall paintings from 1568. Note the Swedish canon ball from the Thirty Years' War stuck in the gate. The gate complex also houses the **Erstes Imaginäres Museum** (First Notional Museum), Bruckgasse 2, ☎ 08071-4358, www.imaginaer.wasserburg.de. It has reproductions of some 500 famous art works from around the world. Although not the real thing, visitors are saved from having to make a world tour to see the originals. Opening hours are February to mid-December, Tuesday to Sunday from 1 to 4 pm, closing at 5 pm from May to September. Admission is €2.50.

The adjacent **Heiliggeist-Spital** (Holy Ghost Hospital), dating from 1341, served its function as a hospice up to 1970. Its church has a precious carved wooden altar from around 1500 by an unknown artist. The 16th-century **Mauthaus** (Toll House), Bruckgasse 25, has some lovely Renaissance oriels. The 65-m/213-ft spire of the **Frauenkirche** (Church of Our Dear Lady) was originally used as town

Brucktor

watchtower. Note the painting of the Virgin; it was first mentioned as performing miracles as far back as 1324.

The Late Gothic **Rathaus** (Town Hall) is from the mid-15th century and has a **Ratstube** (Council Room) in its original condition from 1564. It can only be seen on a guided tour, Tuesday to Sunday at 10 and 11 am, or on weekdays at 2, 3 and 4 pm. Admission is €2.50.

The **Städtische Museum im Heimathaus** (Municipal Museum), Herrengasse 15, ☎ 08071-925-290, www.heimatmuseum-wasserburg.de, is in three Gothic buildings. In addition to the usual collection of furniture, clothes, and implements, it has Gothic frescoes on the second floor. Opening hours are February to mid-December, Tuesday to Sunday from 1 to 4 pm, closing at 5 pm from May to September. Admission is €2.50.

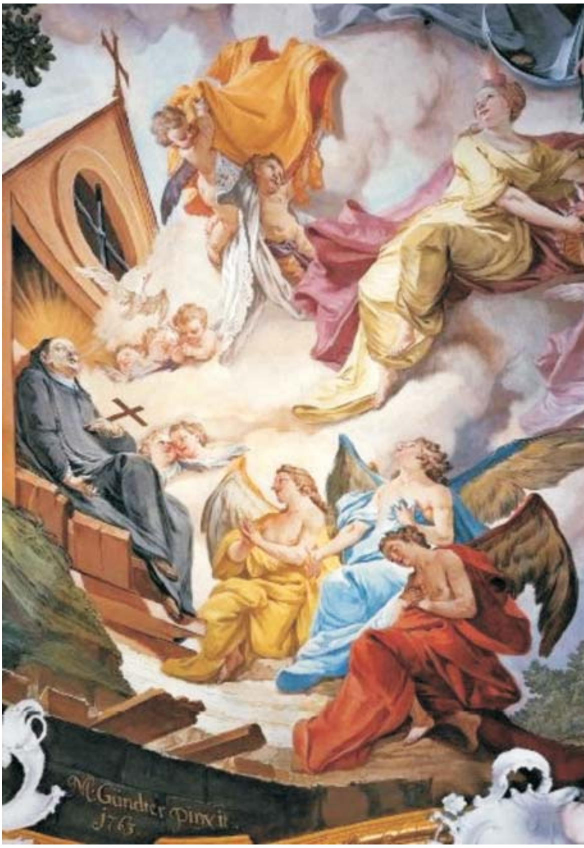
The Rococo façade of the **Kernhaus** is the work of Johann Baptist Zimmermann and one of the loveliest constructions of the period. From here, it is worth walking towards the Inn; follow the curve of the river along Otto-Geigenberger-Weg and return to the Old Town from the opposite side of town via Untere Innstrraße. The **Roter Turm** (Red Tower) is the only surviving gate tower. The nearby squat white **Hungerturm** (literally, Hunger Tower) was a debtors' prison.

The early 14th-century **Pfarrkriche St Jakob** (Parish Church St James) kept most of its Gothic hall-church appearance. However, the artistic highlight is the Renaissance pulpit by the Brothers Zürn. The **castle** partly dates back to the 12th century but received most of its present appearance during the 16th century. It serves as seniors' home and is mostly not open to the public.

Rott am Inn

The former Benedictine **Klosterkirche** (Monastery Church), www.rottinn.de, ☎ 08039-688, in the small town of Rott am Inn, is a Rococo masterpiece often mentioned along the Wieskirche as a defining example of the genre. It was designed by Johann Michael Fisher in 1769-67. The stuccowork is by Franz Xaver Feichtmair and Jakob Rauch, while Matthias Günther did the frescoes and Ignaz Günther most of the sculptures. Franz Josef Strauß, a giant of post-1945 Bavarian politics, is buried in the adjacent cemetery. The church is open from late March to mid-December on Saturday from 1 to 4 pm and Sunday after the 10 am service up to noon and 1 to 5:30 pm. (In November and December it closes at 3:30 pm). It is also open on Friday from 1 to 4 pm, May to October. It is possible to see the church through the railing at the entry portal daily 9 am to 5 pm, closing at 6 pm from April to October.

Rott am Inn is 12 km/7½ miles south of Wasserburg and a pleasant cycling destination. It can also be reached by bus or train (leaving about every two hours and taking 10 minutes).



Fresco in the Klosterkirche

Altötting

Altötting's history goes back to Carolingian times. Charlemagne himself, as well as numerous early Bavarian dukes, often stayed in the town. However, it shot to fame in 1489 when a child run over by a wagon and a toddler who drowned in the Inn came back to life after being placed in front of a statue of the Madonna here. Pilgrims started to arrive in droves and the stream has never stopped. Altötting became the most important pilgrim destination in Bavaria, with about a million believers visiting annually. Pope Pius VI (1782), Pope John Paul II (1980), and Pope Benedict XVI (2006) visited in person, while many others sent gifts. This town lives and breaths religion – if that is not your scene, take a quick look at the Gnadenkapelle and move on to Burgenhausen or Wasserburg, as the rest of the town is not particularly interesting or attractive.

Tourist Information

Wallfahrts- und Verkehrsbüro, Kapellplatz 2a, 84503 Altötting, ☎ 08671-506-219, www.altoetting.de.

Sightseeing

The heart of town is the huge **Kapellplatz** (Chapel Square). In contrast to most town squares, this one is never used for markets or folk festivals but purely for religious gatherings. All the

Altötting Kapellplatz

churches, chapels, and sights related to Altötting's role as a pilgrims' center are on this square.

The most important is the **Gnadenkapelle** (Miraculous Image Chapel). Its octagonal center dates from about 700 and was probably a baptismal chapel attached to the Imperial Palace. The high altar includes the small lime wood statue of the *Black Madonna*, which is the main destination of all pilgrims. This 70-cm/28-inch-high statue was carved about 1330 by an unknown artist, probably in the Rhinelands, but it only started performing miracles at the end of the 15th century. The Gothic nave and covered walkway were added to the chapel during the early 16th century. Around 2,000 *ex votos* cover most of the walkway as confirmation that the Madonna has been active for the past 500 years. The chapel also contains silver urns with the hearts of 21 Wittelsbach dukes and kings as well as that of General Tilly of the Thirty Years' War.

To the south of the Gnadenkapelle is the twin-towered **Stiftskirche St. Phillipp und Jakob** (Abbey Church). It was completed in 1511 as the last Gothic hall church in Bavaria. The church has notable art including intricately carved portals – the Romanesque western parts were incorporated from an earlier basilica. Near the organ is the macabre *Tod von Eding* (Death of Eding), a silver skeleton above a clock that wields its scythe every second as a symbol of someone dying. It dates from the 1630s when the plague ravished the region.

South of the church are the Gothic **cloisters** with some original frescoes. The double chapel in the southeastern corner contains the grave of Tilly. You can descend into the **Tilly Gruft** (grave) for free to peek into his coffin from May to October daily, 8 to 10 am and 2 to 4 pm.

To the north of the church is the **Schatzkammer** (Treasury), ☎ 08671-5166, with some fine pieces. Especially noteworthy is the *Goldene Rössl* (Golden Steed), a masterpiece of Parisian goldsmithery. This bejeweled golden altar with the statue of a horse was presented in 1404 to French King Charles VI by his Bavarian wife Isobel. Also, note the *Füllkreuz*, a 16th-century ivory crucifix with 19 miniatures painted on lapis lazuli. Opening hours are April to October, Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm. Admission is €2.

The huge **Basilika St Anna** (St Anne's Basilica) is a neo-Baroque work completed in 1912. Its outsized dimensions (a nave of 83 by 28 m/272 by 92 ft) were needed to accommodate the flow of pilgrims. It has space for about 8,000. The Late Baroque **St Magdalena** east of the Gnadenkapelle was built by the Capuchin order. Its early 18th-century stuccowork is artistically less accomplished than many other fine examples in the region.

The **Wallfahrts- und Heimatmuseum** (Pilgrimage and Folklore Museum), ☎ 08671-5166, is at the northern part of the square. It has numerous items related to the history of Altötting as a pilgrimage site, including fine examples of folk art. It is open April to October on weekends from 10 am to 3 pm. Admission is €1.50.

A few blocks east of Kapellplatz is the surprisingly impressive **Panorama**, Gebhard-Fugel-Weg 10, ☎ 08671-6934, www.panorama-altoetting.de, a monumental circular painting housed in a specially-built rotunda. This early 20th-century painting of the crucifixion and classical Jerusalem is by Gebhard Fugel. Opening hours are March to October daily from 9 am to 5 pm and November to February weekends only from 11 am to 4 pm. Admission is €4.50.

Across the road is the **Mechanische Krippe** (Mechanical Crib), Kreszentiaheimstraße 18, ☎ 08671-6653, www.mechanische-krippe.de, a collection of some 130 carved wooden nativity figures that are moved electrically. Most were carved during the 1920s in Oberammergau. Opening hours are daily, March to December from 9 am to 5pm. Admission is €1.50.

Marktl

Around 12 km/7½ miles east of Altötting, along the Inn, is the small town of Marktl, with fewer than 2,800 inhabitants. You would have been hard-pressed to find Marktl mentioned in any but the most detailed regional guidebooks published before 2005. However, on April 19, 2005, the town hit gold when a local-born was elected head of the Roman Catholic Church. Within days, tourists and pilgrims started to arrive in droves.

FROM MARKTL TO THE VATICAN

Joseph Alois Ratzinger was born on April 16, 1927 in Marktl am Inn. His father's job as police officer required frequent moves and Joseph spent only two years in this town, but most of his youth in the Inn-Salzach and Chiemgau regions. In 1951, he was ordained as a priest. In 1953, he completed his doctorate in theology and subsequently taught at universities in Bonn, Münster, Tübingen, and Regensburg, before being appointed archbishop of Munich-Freising in 1977. Soon after, he became cardinal and moved to the Vatican. Even as senior clergy, he frequently visited Altötting and other sites in the region almost anonymously. This all changed on April 19, 2005 when he was elected Pope Benedict XVI. On his visit to Altötting on September 11, 2006, he was greeted by 35,000 well-wishers.

Tourist Office

Tourismusbüro, Marktplatz 1, 84533 Marktl, ☎ 08678-748-820, www.marktl.de.

Sightseeing

The problem with basing a small town's tourist industry on the sudden fame of a single person who was born locally but left the town at age two is that there may not be that much to show to visitors. This is very much the case with Marktl. The main sight is the large, square **Geburtshauses Papst Benedikt XVI** (Place of Birth of Pope Benedict XVI), where Joseph Ratzinger was born. The most recent owner had to move out within two weeks of the Pope's election as the number of tourists peeking through the windows simply made the house uninhabitable. It was bought by the town and opened as a museum.

Pope Benedikt revisits Marktl

The other site in town is **Kirche St. Oswald**, Marktplatz 6, ☎ 08678-293, the late 19th-century church where Joseph Ratzinger was baptized on the day of his birth. In 1965, the interior of the church was refurbished and the neo-Gothic Taufbecken (Baptismal Font) was removed to the garden of the local priest. It returned to its original location in 2006.

Burghausen

Burghausen is a town of just under 20,000 with important chemical industries. During the Middle Ages, it played an important role in the salt trade with the white mineral being transported from Salzburg along the Salzach River to the Danube. However, changing trade routes meant a decline in its importance during the 17th century. It is mostly visited for its long castle and lovely, narrow Old Town nestled between the castle and the Salzach River. The best views are from the Austrian side of the river.

Tourist Information

Burghauser Touristik, Stadtplatz 112, 84489 Burghausen, ☎ 08677-887-140, www.burghausen.de.

Burghausen (Bernhard J. Scheuvens)

Sightseeing

The **Burg zu Burghausen** (Castle) is on a long, narrow spur between the Salzach and the Wöhrsee, a small lake. The core of the castle dates from the 13th century but it took on its present appearance mostly at the end of the 15th century when its defenses were strengthened to protect against the Turkish threat. The outer walls stretch for 1,043 m/3,380 ft along the reef, making it the longest castle in Europe. The buildings are grouped around six courtyards

The Burg zu Burghausen (High Contrast) and house several museums. From the Old Town, steep hiking routes lead to the third and sixth (northernmost) courtyards. Parking is available near the sixth courtyard. Arguably, the loveliest approach is to walk from the town center to the south and ascend to the castle along the steep path across from the small lake. Admission to the gardens and most open areas is free.

The **Historisches Stadtmuseum** (Local History Museum), ☎ 08677-65-198, is in the first courtyard of the main palace. It has exhibits on local history as well as collections of birds and butterflies. More interesting is the building itself, with the museum spread over some 30 rooms, including the apartments used by the Bavarian nobility. It is open daily, mid-March to April and October from 10 am to 4:30 pm; May to September from 9 am to 6:30 pm. Admission is €1.50.

Also in the first courtyard is the **Staatliche Sammlung** (National Collection), ☎ 08677-4659, with mostly Late Gothic art. It is housed in the former ducal residence and includes admission to the Gothic Elizabethkapelle (Elizabeth Chapel), with star vaulting as well as the viewing platform – 62 steps up to marvelous views of the Old Town and Salzach Valley. Opening hours are daily, from April to September, 9 am to 6 pm and October to March, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €3.

In the fourth courtyard is the **Museum im Folterturm** (Torture Tower), ☎ 08677-64-190, with exhibitions in the former torture chambers and prisons. A subterranean passage leads to the **Hexenturm** (Witches' Tower). Opening hours are daily from April to Pentecost, 10 am to 5 pm and Pentecost to October, 9 am to 6 pm. From November to March it is only open on weekends, 11 am to 4 pm. Admission is €1.50.

Burghausen has a lovely **Old Town** squeezed into the narrow strip of land between the Salzach and the castle reef. Its appearance is often described as more Italian than German due to its colorful houses with red-tiled roofs.

The most impressive buildings are around the large, elongated **Stadtplatz** (Town Square) in the middle of the town. At the north end is **St Joseph** with a lovely Baroque façade from 1630. Its original lavish interior was destroyed by fire in 1863. In 1809, Napoleon stayed for four days in the **Tauffkirchen-Palais** (Palace), Stadtplatz 97, with a rich Rococo façade. The **Marienbrunnen** (Mary Fountain) has been in use since 1440 but the column is from the 17th century. The **Regierungsgebäude** (Government Buildings), Stadtplatz 108, is mid-16th-century Renaissance and has three decorative towers and a façade bearing the Bavarian coat of arms. The **Rathaus** (Town Hall) Stadtplatz 112-114, is partly from the 14th century, with a neo-Classical façade from 1788.

On the opposite side of the square is the **Stadtapotheke**, Stadtplatz 40, one of the oldest pharmacies in Bavaria. It has been on this location since 1596. It was damaged by bombing in 1945, as was the **Löwenbrunnen** (Lions' Fountain) in front. The present fountain was rebuilt in 1976 using some of the 17th-century parts. At the southern end of the square is the **Pfarrkirche St Jakob** (Parish Church St Jacob). It was consecrated in 1140 but numerous fires and building collapses required rebuilding. The present neo-Gothic structure is mostly mid-19th century.

From here, **In den Grüben** leads into the former craftsmen's district. It is lined with numerous Gothic buildings as well as brass plaques honoring famous jazz players who performed at the annual jazz festival. The **Mautnerschloss** (Toll Collector's Palace), In den Grüben 193, ☎ 08677-2741, once housed writer Ludwig Thoma but now is an exciting jazz venue.

Festivals

Burghausen is famous for its **Jazzwoche** (Jazz Week), www.b-jazz.com, held in mid-March. The international who's who of jazz has been performing here for the past four decades. **Jazzkeller im Mautnerschloß**, In den Grüben 193, 84489 Burghausen, ☎ 08677-2741, has high-quality performances throughout the year.

Shopping

Altötting is literally brimming with all kinds of religious items for sale in numerous shops and stalls. The selection ranges from kitsch to fine art – all depending on your point of view and the thickness of your wallet. Newly fashionable are items associated with Pope Benedict. **Marktl**, www.marktlshop.de, sells limited edition silver coins for around €25, books, trinkets, as well as miniatures of his birth house.

Adventures

On Foot

■ Town Walks

The **tourist office in Burghausen** conducts guided walks of the Old Town and castle on weekends at 11 am and 2 pm from Easter to October.

On Wheels

By Bicycle

The Inn-Salzach region is mostly flat, agricultural land and thus ideal for cycling. Several long-distance routes go through the region. A popular new one is the 248-km/154-mile **Benediktweg** (Benedict Route), www.benediktweg.info. It passes through the region that Pope Benedict called home in his youth, including Altötting, Marktl, Burghausen, Seeon, Amerang, and Wasserburg.

The **Inntalradweg** (Inn Valley Cycling Route), www.innregionen.com, is 400 km/250 miles long from the Austrian Tirol to the Inn's confluence with the Danube in Passau. Just over half the route is in Bavaria. The route follows the flow of the river fairly closely and is mostly on quiet roads or dedicated cycling paths.

A popular short cycle is from Burghausen upstream to the Pilgrim Church Mary's Assumption and the Raitenhaslach Monastery. The total ride is less than 15 km/10 miles and different routes can be followed in each direction. Marktl is about the same distance from Burghausen but downstream.

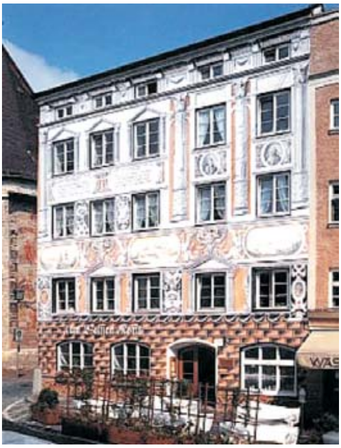
Bicycles can be rented in **Wasserburg** from the **Gäste-Information im Rathaus**, Marienplatz 2, or **Wasserburger Radhaus**, Lerdererzeile 44, ☎ 08071-94-831, and in **Burghausen** from **FUN Sport- & Bikecenter**, ☎ 08677-911-766, or **Sport-Radauer**, ☎ 08677-881-335.

Where to Stay & Eat

For hotel and restaurant price codes, see pages 50 and 52.

Wasserburg am Inn

The pleasant **Hotel Fletzinger** is in the historical area and has a three-century tradition as a guesthouse. Rooms are furnished in styles ranging from traditional to very modern. The various rooms of the **restaurant** (€-€€) similarly range in style from modern to traditional, with antique furniture. Both international and local dishes are served. Fletzingergasse 1, 83512 Wasserburg, ☎ 08071-90-890, fax 08071-908-9177, www.hotel-fletzinger.de. (€€-€€€)


Weisses Rössl

In the heart of the Old Town in a historical townhouse with a lovely painted façade is the **Weisses Rössl**, Herrengasse 1, ☎ 08071-50-291. It serves regional and international dishes. (€-€€€)

Altötting

Altötting's top hotel is **Zur Post**, in a 17th-century building converted to Italian Baroque style by Domenico Zucalli, who also worked on Schloss Nymphenburg. Rooms are modern and nicely furnished. The large spa area has several pools and saunas. The **restaurant** (€-€€€) has six rooms, which range from stylish to traditional country house décor. The food is both regional and international, with an emphasis on upmarket French and Italian cuisine. Kapellplatz 2, 84503 Altötting, ☎ 08671-5040, fax 08671-6214, www.zurpostaltoetting.de. (€€-€€€)

Zur Post

Adjacent to the St Anne Basilica is **Hotel Zwölf Apostel**. The building is also from the 17th century, with a yellow-painted façade. Rooms are functionally furnished, if a bit old-fashioned. The rustic **restaurant** (€€) serves mostly Bavarian food. Bruder-Konrad-Platz 3-4, 84503 Altötting, ☎ 08761-96-960, fax 08671-84-371, www.hotel-zwoelf-apostel.de. (€€)

Burghausen

Hotel Post is in the heart of town, shaded in the afternoon by Europe's longest castle. It has a history going back to 1450. Rooms are comfortably furnished. The **restaurant** (€-€€) with beer garden serves mostly local cuisine. Stadtplatz 39, 84489 Burghausen, ☎ 08677-9650, fax 08677-965-666, www.hotelpost.de. (€€)

Reisingers Bayerische Alm restaurant

Under the same management but on the Austrian side of the river is **Hotel Burgblick**, with fine views of the castle. Rooms are very pleasant and stylish with modern furnishings. A-5122 Ach 31, Austria, ☎ 0043-7727-40-040, fax 0043-7727-4004-3666, www.hotelpost.de. (€€-€€€)

Landhotel Reisingers Bayerische Alm is quietly located at the edge of town with views of the Burg and the Salzach. Rooms are comfortably furnished. The excellent **restaurant** (€€) serves mostly local cuisine with a light touch, set in a large, rustic space spread over two floors or on the pleasant terrace. Robert-Koch-Straße 211, 84489 Burghausen, ☎ 08677-9820, fax 08677-982-200, www.bayerischealm.de. (€€-€€€)

Fuchstuben, Mautner Straße 271, ☎ 08677-62-724, is at the southern end of the Old Town. It has smart antique furniture and serves mostly local cuisine. (€-€€)

Youth Hostels

The **DJH Burghausen** is in the southern part of town in a former monastery. It is closed in December and January. Kapuzinergasse 235, 84489 Burghausen, ☎ 08677-4187, fax 08677-911-318.

Camping

Campsites in this region are very limited and mostly occupied by long-term campers. Few would regret pushing on to the much better sites available near the Chiemsee.

Campingplatz Soyensee is 10 km/six miles from Wasserburg, next to a small lake. Two-thirds of the 150 lots are for long-term campers. It is open from April to October. Seestrasse 28, 83564 Soyen, ☎ 08071-3860, fax 08071-51-969, www.soyensee.de.

Chiemsee

The Chiemsee and Chiemgau incorporate the area west of the Inn, extending to the German-Austrian border along the Salzach River. The Chiemsee (Chiem Lake) is Bavaria's largest and its close proximity to Munich makes it a favored day-trip destination. In addition to King Ludwig II's fantasy castle, Herrenchiemsee, numerous other churches, monasteries, and palaces provide cultural alternatives to the outdoor pursuits that the region caters for so well. To the south are the Alps, with the popular resorts of Ruhpolding and Reit im Winkel.

The lake has a circumference of 64 km/40 miles and is freely accessible. It is 14 km /8.7 miles long, just over 10 km/six miles wide, and up to 73 m/240 ft deep. Water quality is very good.

Tourist Information

Chiemsee-Tourismus, Felden 10, 83233 Bernau, ☎ 08051-965-550, www.chiemsee.de.

Getting Around

Chiemsee is easily reached by road or rail. Trains from Munich run hourly to Prien. Note that the Oberbayern Ticket (see *Inn Valley* above) is not valid on the section from Munich via

Rosenheim and Prien to Freilassing near Salzburg but is valid on all trains north of this line. The lake is next to the Autobahn A8, about an hour's drive from Munich or 30 minutes from Salzburg.

From May to September, an original steam tram engine with wagons from 1887 operates between Prien train station and the boat landing. A shuttle bus operates on the same route all year. Alternatively, it is a 1½-km/one-mile stroll. Although ferry services (they take bicycles) are available from several towns, the most frequent and shortest rides to the islands are from Prien.

Prien

Tourist Office

Kur- und Tourismusbüro, Alte Rathausstraße 11, 83209 Prien, ☎ 08051-69-050, www.tourismus.prien.de.

Sights

Prien, with 10,000 inhabitants, is the largest town on the lake and has very good tourist facilities. It is mostly visited as a starting point for seeing the islands in the Chiemsee. However, it is worth peeking into the **Pfarrkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt** (Parish Church of the Assumption), Marktplatz, ☎ 08051-1010. This was originally Late Gothic but was completely restyled as Baroque in the early 18th century. There is a wonderful ceiling fresco of the naval battle of Lepanto (1571) by Johann Baptist Zimmermann. It is near the station but on the opposite side from the lake.

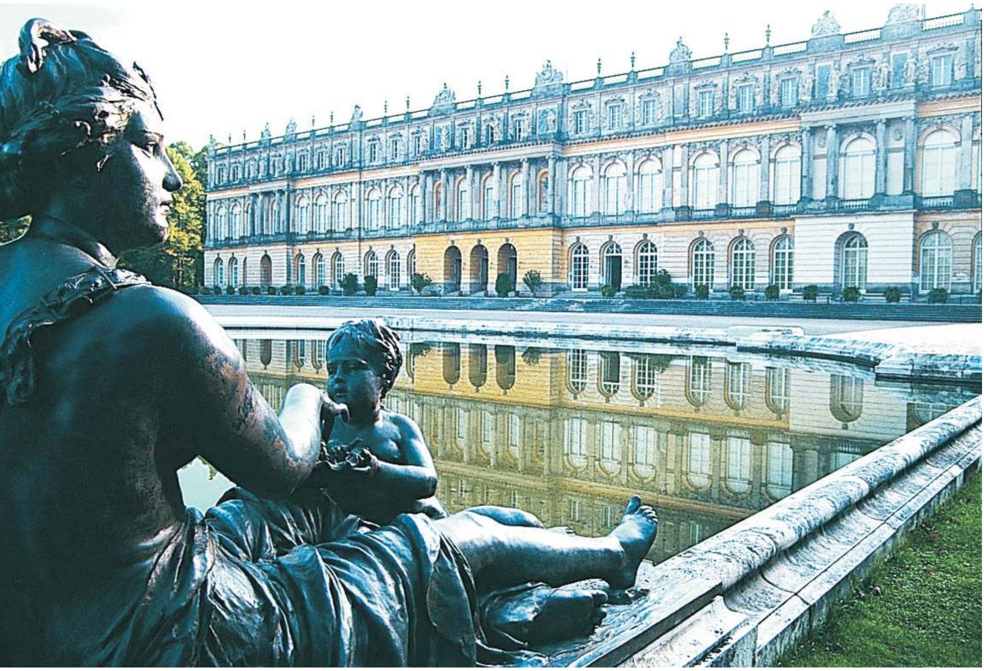
Pfarrkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt

Chiemsee Islands

The main attractions in the area are on the two largest islands in the lake: **Herrenchiemsee** (Men's) and **Frauenchiemsee** (Women's) islands. These are named after the monastery and nunnery that were originally on the islands. Both are traffic-free and easily reached by frequent boats from Prien.

Herrenchiemsee

Herrenchiemsee Island is the more famous and popular because King Ludwig II erected the magnificent **Schloss Herrenchiemsee** (New Palace), 83209 Herrenchiemsee, ☎ 08051-68-870, www.herrenchiemsee.de, here in the late 19th century. Ludwig admired his French namesake, Louis XIV. They were equally vain but, in contrast to the Sun King, Ludwig had no actual power and limited talent. His Schloss Herrenchiemsee was meant to be the new Versailles. It lacks none of the French palace's pomp or splendor and actually has a Great Hall of Mirrors larger than the original. Only 20 of the rooms were completed, but that alone cost more than Ludwig's two other follies – Schloss Linderhof and Schloss Neuschwanstein – combined. Other highlights include the ambassadorial staircase, a huge bath, a dining table that was hoisted from a floor below so the King could eat in complete privacy, and a ceremonial bedroom. The interior can only be seen on a 40-minute guided tour – frequent English tours are available. Opening hours are daily from April to October 3, 9 am to 6 pm, October 4-31, 9:40 am to 5 pm, and November to March, 9:40 am to 4 pm. The fountains in the park play daily every 15 minutes from May to September, between 9:35 am and 5:25 pm.



Schloss Herrenchiemsee

Inside the palace is the **King Ludwig II Museum**. It has exhibits on the king's life and plans. Several other castles were planned in addition to the ones he actually started. It also has a section on his friendship with Richard Wagner, with portraits and stage sets. Opening hours are the same as for the Schloss.

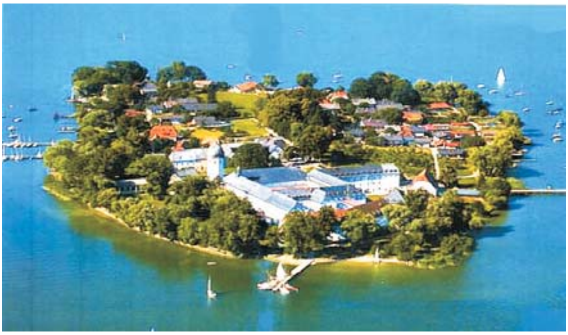
In the **Altes Schloss** (Old Palace) is the **Museum im Augustiner-Chorherrenstift Herrenchiemsee** (Museum in the Augustinian Monastery), 83209 Herrenchiemsee, ☎ 08051-68-870, www.herrenchiemsee.de. A Benedictine monastery was founded on the island in the eighth century but replaced in 1130 by an Augustinian Order. The current palace building was later remodeled in a Baroque style. It was secularized in 1803 and King Ludwig stayed here after acquiring the island in 1873. The museum has an exhibition on the history of the island as well as the history of the German constitution – an early meeting of the constitutional convention met here in 1948. An art gallery has 80 paintings by Munich artist Julius Exeter (1863-1939). Opening hours are the same as those above. The Julius Exeter collection is closed from November to March. Admission is €2.50, but included in the combination ticket with the New Palace.

VISITORS' INFORMATION

Admission to the island and parks is free. A combination ticket of €7 gives access to the Herrenchiemsee (New) Palace, King Ludwig II Museum, and the Museum in the Old Palace (Monastery). The latter can also be seen separately for €2.50.

The former Augustine Monastery is right at the boat landing. It is now a hotel and has a large restaurant. The new palace is a pleasant 15-minute stroll from here. In summer, a horse-drawn carriage (€3) will take you there. Cars, bicycles, and pets are banned from the island. (Bicycles may be taken on some ferries but have to be left at the landing.)

Frauenchiemsee



Frauenchiemsee

Frauenchiemsee has some 300 inhabitants and is famous for its nunnery and smoked fish. The nunnery was founded in 766 by Duke Tassilo III, the last Agilolfinger. It became an Imperial Monastery during the reign of Charlemagne and Irmengard, daughter of German King Ludwig the German, once served as abbess. The monastery was secularized in 1803, but King Ludwig I later opened a new Benedictine Monastery. The monastery is still in operation, with the nuns running a popular conference center.

In addition to the Baroque monastery, the main sight on the island is the 1,000-year-old Romanesque **Münsterkirche Mariä Opferung**. Its freestanding, onion-domed campanile was erected in the 11th century but converted to the Gothic style during the 14th century, while the onion dome was added following a fire in the 16th century. During the 1950s, frescoes dating back to 1130 were rediscovered. The nearby Carolingian **Torhalle** (Gate Portal), Frauenchiemseestraße 41, ☎ 08054-7256, is one of the oldest buildings in Bavaria and has an angel cycle painted in 860. There is an exhibition of mainly medieval art works. It is open daily May to October from 11 am to 6 pm. Admission is €1.50.

Seebruck

Tourist Office

Tourist-Information, Am Anger 1, 83358 Seebruck, ☎ 08667-7139, www.seeon-seebruck.de.

Sights

Seebruck, on the northern shores of the lake, has a lovely yacht harbor, making it a popular stop for sailors. It is also a good starting point for excursions to the cultural sights in Seeon and Amerang.

Although Seebruck had a fort in Roman times since it was on the trading route from Salzburg to Augsburg, now, 2,000 years later, it is a small village of some 1,500 permanent inhabitants. The importance of this trade route is illustrated in the **Römermuseum Bedaium** (Roman Museum), Römerstraße 3, 83358 Seebruck, ☎ 08667-7503, www.roemermuseum-seebruck.de. The main collection consists of items from a Roman graveyard discovered in 1972. Opening hours are May to September, Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am to 5 pm and Sunday 1 to 5 pm. In February, March, April, October and November it is open Tuesday to Saturday 10 am to noon and 3 to 5 pm, Sunday 3 to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

Seeon

Kloster Seeon

To the north of Seebruck is an area with 14 small lakes known as the Seeoner Seenplatte. On a dam in the largest lake, Klostersee (Monastery Lake), is the beautifully located former Benedictine **Kloster Seeon** (monastery), Klosterweg 1, 83770 Seeon, ☎ 08624-8970, www.kloster-seeon.de. The monastery was founded in 994 and was famous for its book-copying industry. It is currently a cultural and conference center and most of the complex is not open to the public if you are not attending one of the numerous functions or exhibitions held here. The lovely restaurant, as well as the **Klosterkirche St Lambert** (Monastery Church), however, are open to the public. It is in essence an 11th- and 12th-century Romanesque structure but it had a Gothic makeover during the mid-15th century.

MOZART IN SEEON

Close connections between the Bishopric of Salzburg and the Monastery Seeon meant that a young Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart visited the monastery several times between 1767 and 1769. He composed two sacral pieces especially for the abbot. Not surprisingly, Mozart's music features frequently in the concerts held here and Seeon is an important stop on the Mozart Cycling Route.

Amerang

Tourist Office

Tourist-Information, Bahnhofstraße 3, 83123 Amerang, ☎ 08075-919-728, www.amerang.de.

Sights

Farther to the west is Amerang, a town famous for its Renaissance palace and two excellent museums. The town is 15 km/10 miles northwest of the lake and the same distance from Wasserburg am Inn.

Schloss Amerang, Schloss 1, 83123 Amerang, ☎ 08075-91-920, www.schlossamerang.de, was first mentioned in 1072 but the present Italian Renaissance conversion of what is in essence a Gothic castle was done in the 16th century by the Scaliger from Verona. The castle is almost round in shape but most impressive are the three floors of arcaded walkways looking down on the trapeziform central courtyard. It is the largest irregularly shaped courtyard in Germany and the excellent acoustics make it a popular venue for frequent concerts. The interior and museum can only be seen on guided tours

Schloss Amerang *(Patrick Huebgen)*

that take place every hour between 10 am and 3 pm (but not at 1 pm) on Tuesday to Sunday from Easter to mid-October. Admission is €4. A luxury suite (€€€€) can be rented in the castle.

Bauernhausmuseum Amerang (Farmhouses Museum), Im Hopfgarten 2, 83123 Amerang, ☎ 08075-915-090, www.bauernhaus-museum-amerang.de, is an open-air museum where farmhouses from the region are preserved in their original form. Currently, there are about 10 farmhouses, but the number is increasing. Exhibitions and demonstrations show rural life in previous centuries. (The museum is a branch of the larger Glentleitenmuseum near Kochel.) Opening hours are mid-March to early November, Tuesday to Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm. Admission is €3.

EFA Museum für Deutsche Automobilgeschichte (German Automobile History), Wasserburger Straße 38, 83123 Amerang, ☎ 08075-8141, www.efa-automuseum.de, with 200 vehicles from all periods, is the largest of its kind in Germany. It has cars from 1886 to the present but the pre-World War II collection is particularly impressive. The museum shop has a wealth of motoring books and scale models. Opening hours are 10 am to 6 pm from April to October, Tuesday to Sunday, and November to March Sunday only. Admission is €6.50.

Cultural Event

Chiemsee Seebühnen is an open-air theater with the stage set on the lake. It is used for numerous performances throughout the year, with a special event series in summer. The theater itself is on the southern shore between Prien and Bernau, but information and tickets are available from tourist offices or **Chiemsee Seebühnen**, Alte Rathausstraße 11, 83209 Prien am Chiemsee, ☎ 08051-69-050, www.seebuehne.de.

Some of the best concerts in the region on perhaps the most romantic stage are held in **Schloss Amerang**, ☎ 08075-919-299, www.schloss-amerang.de. Most concerts take place in July and August in the trapeziform courtyard of the castle. The music ranges from classical to jazz.

In July, the **Herrenchiemsee-Festspiele**, www.herrenchiemsee-festspiele.de, a 10-day musical festival, is held in the courtyard and hall of mirrors of the Herrenchiemsee Palace. The concerts are mostly operas and symphonies.

Musiksommer (Musical Summer), ☎ 0861-58-324, www.musik-sommer.info, is a series of classical concerts held annually in summer at various locations between the Inn and Salzach rivers.

Concerts (mostly classical music) and exhibitions are held throughout the year in the former **Kloster Seeon**, Klosterladen Seeon, Klosterweg 15, 83370 Seeon, ☎ 08624-897-201, www.klosterladen-seeon.de.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

The 60 km/37 miles around the Chiemsee can easily be cycled in less than a day and shorter stretches as well as excursions to nearby towns such as Seeon are popular. Many of the tourist offices in the region conduct guided cycling tours in summer but on an irregular basis. The **tourist office in Grassau**, ☎ 08641-697-960, www.grassau.com, has guided mountain bike tours every second Friday afternoon.

The **Mozart Radweg**, www.mozartradweg.de, is a popular long-distance cycling route through the region. This 450-km/280-mile circular route includes many towns in the area, such as Seeon and Reit im Winkl, and passes through parts of Austria as well. **Step4Step**, Steinbergstrasse 10, 83259 Schleching-Mettenham, ☎ 08649-986-618, www.step-for-step.de, can make arrangements for this as well as other cycling tours.

Bicycles can be rented in virtually any town here, including **Prien** from the **Bahnhof**, ☎ 08051-2874 or the **Minigolfplatz**, ☎ 08051-964-789; **Seebruck** from **Seehotel Wassermann**, Ludwig-Thoma-Straße 1, ☎ 08667-8710, or **Bikes and More**, Am Seefeld 4, ☎ 08667-876-855; and **Amerang** from **Zum Steinbauer**, Forellenweg 8, ☎ 08075-211.

Adventures in the Air

Cable Cars

The **Kampenwandseilbahn** (cable car), An der Bergbahn 8, 83229 Aschau, ☎ 08052-4411, www.kampenwand.de, transports visitors in 15 minutes to about 200 m/656 ft below the 1,669-m/4,576-ft peak. The views from here over the Chiemsee area are fantastic. From the mountain station, it is still an hour walk to the top of the peak and back, or two hours down to the valley.

Hot-Air Ballooning

Hot-air balloon rides are available from **Manfred Szemborski**, Mailinger Weg 5, 83233 Hittenkrichen-Bernau, ☎ 08051-4381; **Jonathan Ballooning**, Max-Kurz-Straße 3, Chieming, ☎ 08664-927-614, www.jonathan-ballooning.de; and **Alpen-Ballooning**, 83243 Reit im Winkl, ☎ 08640-208-999, www.alpen-ballooning.de.

Parachuting & Paragliding

For tandem parachute jumps and hang-gliding, contact **Flugschule Chiemsee**, Dreilindenweg 7, 83229 Aschau, ☎ 08052-9494, www.flugschule-chiemsee.de.

Adventures on Water

Boat Rental

Pedal, rowing, and electric boats can be rented without reservations and by the hour from the promenades in virtually any town along the Chiemsee. Seebruck in the north and Brenau in the south are the two towns with the widest variety of watersports options.

Kayaks can be rented from **Wassersport Zentrum**, Ludwig-Thoma-Straße 1, 83358 Seebruck, ☎ 08667-8710, or **Bavaria Boote**, Harrasser Straße 39, Prien, ☎ 08051-4575.

Sailboats and yachts can be chartered from **Yachtenmeltl**, Chiemseestraße 65, 83233 Bernau, ☎ 08051-965-530, www.yachten-meltl.de.

Windsurfers are available from **Christian Kaufmann**, Ludwig-Thoma-Straße15a, Bernau, ☎ 08051-7777, www.surfschule-chiemsee.de, or **See-Cafe Feichtmayr**, Traunsteiner Straße 33/35, Seebruck, ☎ 08667-600.

Lake Boats

Chiemsee Schifffahrt, Seestraße 108, 83209 Prien, ☎ 08051-6090, www.chiemsee-schifffahrt.de, operates ferries year-round from Prien to the island of Herrenchiemsee, continuing to Frauenchiemsee. Boats depart year-round every 20 minutes. Cruises on the lake and to many other towns operate from May to September.

Where to Stay & Eat

Prien

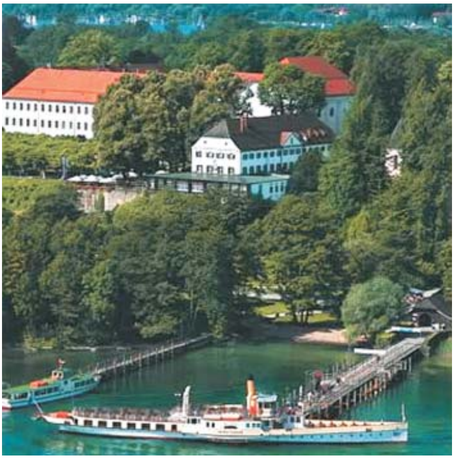
The **Yachthotel Chiemsee** is idyllically located on the lake with views of Herrenchiemsee Island. The small yacht harbor is directly in front of the hotel. Rooms are nicely furnished and most have lake views. The honeymoon suite is spread over three floors. The hotel has several dining options but the **See-Restaurant** (€€-€€€) is the best, serving nouvelle cuisine with strong regional and French influences. The **Café** (€-€€), with a terrace, has pleasant views too. Yacht charters are available. Harrasser Straße 49, 83209 Prien-Harras, ☎ 08051-6960, fax 08051-5171, www.yachthotel.de. (‡€€-€€€€)

See pages 50 and 52 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

The **Hotel Bayerischer Hof** is in the heart of the town. It has a rustic ambience and rooms furnished with oak furniture. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves hearty local cuisine. Bernauer Straße 3, 83209 Prien, ☎ 08051-6030, fax 08051-62-917, www.bayerischerhof-prien.de. (€€)

The **Restaurant Mühlberger**, Bernauerstraße 40, ☎ 08051-966-888, serves nouvelle cuisine and regional dishes. It has wood-paneled walls and an elegant ambiance. The service and wine list are excellent, as befits a Michelin-star establishment. (€€-€€€)

Herrenchiemsee Island



Schlosshotel Herrenchiemsee

It is possible to spend the night on King Ludwig's traffic-free island. Unfortunately, the opulent palace is not available, but the **Schlosshotel Herrenchiemsee** is in a mansion older than Ludwig's fantasy palace. Rooms are pleasant, but not particularly luxurious or spacious. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) is famous for its fish dishes. The hotel is only a few minutes walk from the boat landing and is open from Easter to October; the restaurant is open all year. 83209 Herrenchiemsee, ☎/fax 08051-1509, www.schlosshotel-herrenciemsee.com. (€€-€€€)

Fraueninsel

Hotel zur Linde, on the car-free Fraueninsel, is one of the oldest hotels in Bavaria. It was long favored by artists and has simple, bright rooms. The historic **Fischerstüberl** (€€-€€€) serves mainly fish. 83256 Chiemsee-Fraueninsel, ☎ 08054-90-366, fax 08054-7299, hotel.linde.fraueninsel@t-online.de. (€€€)

Seebruck

Hotel Malerwinkel has a lovely location with lake views from many rooms. Bedrooms use mostly country house-style furniture. Bicycle rentals, a

Hotel Malerwinkel

private beach, and boat landing are available to guests. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€), with panorama windows and a terrace, serves international and regional food. Lambach 23, 83358 Seebruck, ☎ 08667-88-800, fax 08667-888-044, www.hotelmalerwinkel.de. (€€-€€€)

The nearby **Hotel Lambach** is in a large country house with a painted façade that dates from the mid-17th century. Former guests include Napoleon Bonaparte and Ludwig II. Rooms are bright and nicely furnished using ample natural wood. The rustic **restaurant** (€-€€) has mostly regional cuisine including a selection of local fish, venison, and lamb. Lambach 8-10, 83358 Seebruck-Lambach, ☎ 08667-87-990, fax 08667-879-9199, www.hotel-lambach.de. (€€-€€€)

Klostergaststätte, ☎ 08624-897-429, is a fine restaurant with Gothic vaulting inside the Seeon Monastery. It also has a very pleasant terrace. Bavarian and international food is served. (€€-€€€)

The **Glockenwirt zu Amerang**, Bahnhofstraße 23, 83123 Amerang, ☎ 08075-8263, is in the heart of Amerang. Although in a new building, the décor and food are typical rustic Bavarian. (€€)

Chieming

Gut Ising

Gut Ising is literally a hotel town with a 2,000-year history. It was once a Roman guesthouse but the present hotel has been in operation for only 400 years. The bedrooms are spread over seven different buildings, all using different styles ranging from Biedermeier to painted farmhouse furniture and modern. All are stylish and luxurious. Many have balconies. The hotel has direct access to the lake as well as spa facilities, a golf course and a horseback-riding school. Rental bicycles are available to guests. **Zum Goldenen Pflug** (€€-€€€) is a stylish, yet romantic restaurant serving international cuisine as well as local food inspired by the monastery kitchens of the region. **Il Cavallo** (€€) has mostly Italian food. Kirchberg 3, 83339 Chieming/Ising, ☎ 08667-790, fax 08667-7943, www.gut-ising.com. (€€€-€€€€)

Aschau

The luxury **Residenz Heinz Winkler** is one of the grandest hotels in Bavaria. A member of the Relais & Chateaux, it is in a late-medieval, 15th-century building, which was converted into a Venetian-style palace. Rooms are large, luxurious, and stylish. Many have balconies, terraces, or private gardens. A large, grand spa area with pools and saunas is available to houseguests. However, the hotel is most famous for its **restaurant** (€€€€) – Heinz Winkler is the only Michelin three-star chef in Bavaria. International nouvelle cuisine and his own creations are served in luxurious surroundings. Kirchplatz 1, 83229 Aschau, ☎ 08052-17-990, fax 08052-179-966, www.residenz-heinz-winkler.de. (€€€€)

Residenz Heinz Winkler

Youth Hostels

The **DJH Prien** is a 20-minute walk from the station and 10 minutes from the boat landing. It is closed in December and January. Carl-Braun-Straße 66, 83209 Prien, ☎ 08051-68-770, fax 08051-687-715.

Camping

Various campsites are scattered around the lake and region. Two of the best are in Prien.

Panoramacamping Harras is quietly and beautifully located on a small peninsula near Prien. It has wonderful views of the lake. The site has 180 lots, many with shade. Facilities are very good. The site is open from mid-April to mid-October. Harrasser Straße 135, 83209 Prien am Chiemsee, ☎ 08051-90-460, fax 08051-904-616, www.camping-harras.de.

Camping Hofbauer is at the southern edge of Prien, 1½ km/one mile from the lakeshore. It has excellent facilities and 120 lots. Bicycle rental is available on-site. It is open from April to October. Bernauerstraße 110, 83209 Prien am Chiemsee, ☎ 08051-4136, fax 08051-62-657, www.camping-prien-chiemsee.de.

Chiemsee Camping Rödlgries has a lovely location directly on the south bank of the lake. There are 500 lots and it's open from April to October. Rödlgries 1, 83236 Übersee, ☎ 08642-470, fax 08642-1636, www.chiemsee-camping.de.

Campingplatz Lambach has direct access to the lake, with a small beach as well as electric boats and rowboats for rent. It has 100 lots and is open from April to October. Lambach 3, 83358 Seebruck, ☎ 08667-7889, www.chiemgau-camping.de.

Berchtesgadener Land

The Berchtesgaden area is one of the most beautiful parts of Germany. The Alps are a constant presence, the towns are small and picturesque, and the natural beauty is serene. The area is very popular, with the high season in July and August for families, autumn and spring for hikers and cyclists, and December to March for winter sports fans.

It is also infamous as the favored retreat of Adolf Hitler. Although most of the buildings erected by the Nazis as holiday villas for the top leaders have been destroyed, some interesting sites survived, including bunkers and Hitler's Eagles Nest.

The Watzmann peak, at 2,713 m/8,899 ft Germany's second-highest, forms the backdrop to many parts of Berchtesgaden. It is particularly impressive when it drops 1,800 m/5,900 ft almost straight into the beautiful Königssee Lake.

Information Sources

Tourist Office

Tourist information is available from **Berchtesgaden Tourismus**, Königssee Straße 2, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-967-270, www.berchtesgadener-land.com.

Getting Around

Public transportation is available to all parts of the region, making one-way hiking trips easy. In addition, many transportation modes are geared for easy connections, e.g., from bus to cable car to boat. Except for the high season, driving is a very pleasant option too, with ample parking lots at major attractions.

From Munich, at least hourly trains take about 2½ hours and require a changeover at Freilassing, or a change in Salzburg to a bus.

By car, the fastest way from Munich to Berchtesgaden is along the Autobahn A8 passing through Austria at Salzburg. However, do note that an Austrian highway vignette (toll pass) is required. Otherwise turn off at Bad Reichenhall and use the beautiful country road. Using local roads from Berchtesgaden to Salzburg is more direct and faster than the Austrian autobahn, which requires a vignette. However, parking in Salzburg is scarce and very expensive, making the public bus a better option for daytrips. Bus 840 runs hourly on weekdays (much less frequent on weekends) from Berchtesgaden station to the center of Salzburg in 45 minutes.

Bad Reichenhall

Bad Reichenhall has a lovely location on the Salzach River with mountains rising on two sides of this posh town of 20,000. Salt has been the lifeblood of Bad Reichenhall ever since Celtic times. The local saline springs are the saltiest in Europe, with a concentration of up to 24%.

Tourism has played an increasingly important role in the local economy since King Maximilian I visited the saline spas in the mid-19th century. This classy town has the best spas in the Bavarian Alps and the whole area has an upmarket feel to it. Its fine hotels and good transportation links make it a popular alternative to staying in Berchtesgaden or Salzburg.

Tourist Office

Kur-GmbH, Wittelsbacherstraße 15, 83435 Bad Reichenhall, ☎ 08651-6060, www.bad-reichenhall.de.

Sightseeing

Bad Reichenhall suffered a devastating town fire in 1834, so most buildings are 19th-century or newer. The town has numerous large Gründerzeit villas, which contributes to the rather formal, upmarket feel of the place. Most sights are related to the salt and spa industries.

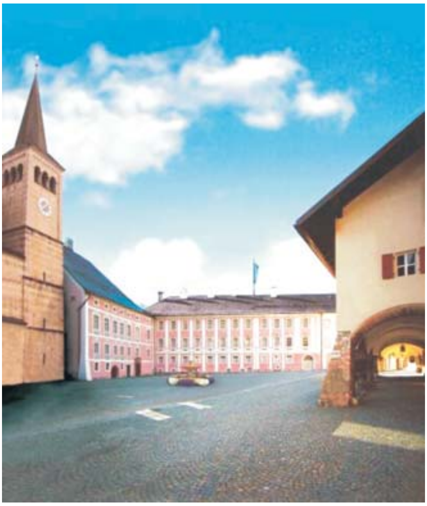
The **Kurpark** (Spa Park) is a well-maintained small park with the principle spa buildings erected in the early 20th century. The **Altes Kurhaus** (Old Spa Building) has three concert halls, including the Wandelhalle, used for the daily spa concerts when inclement weather makes performances in the pavilion impossible. Most German spa towns have their own orchestras, usually a small band of mostly brass instruments but Bad Reichenhall makes do with a full 40-member symphony orchestra. Another unique feature is the **Gradierwerk**, a huge 170-m/560-ft wooden pavilion with mostly open walls used as an "inhalatorium." The roof is covered with 200,000 white and blackthorn twigs, which are sprayed daily with 40,000 gallon of saline water, creating the perfect atmosphere to relieve respiratory problems. It generally operates from April to October.

About 500 m/550 yards down Salzburger Straße from the Kurgarten is the 12th-century Romanesque **Basilika St Zeno** (Basilica). This former Augustinian monastery church is 90-m/300-ft long and 30-m/100-ft wide – the largest Romanesque structure in southern Bavaria. It received a Gothic makeover in the late Middle Ages but still has its original Romanesque portal as well as cloisters with a relief of Emperor Barbarossa on his crusade.

At the opposite side of the Kurpark, on the far end of the stylish Ludwigstraße, a pedestrian street with numerous shops and boutiques, is the **Alte Saline**. This neo-Romanesque building (1834) houses the source of the springs as well as a museum on the history of salt mining. The huge machines and wheels, some dating from the Middle Ages, are in good working order and pump the brine from a depth of 40 m/130 ft to the surface. (However, this is only for show: a modern salt works a few blocks to the south produces the salt nowadays. Bad Reichenhall is still the largest supplier of table salt in Germany.) Guided tours with a demonstration are held April to October daily between 10 and 11:30 am and 2 and 4 pm. From November to March, tours are only on Tuesday and Thursday between 2 and 4 pm. Admission is €3.50.

Berchtesgaden Town

Berchtesgaden has a lovely Old Town with an interesting Schloss and museum. However, the indoor sights here are best left for bad weather days. They are interesting, but the natural beauty of the area has much more to offer.



Königliches Schloss Berchtesgaden

The **Königliches Schloss Berchtesgaden** (Royal Palace), Schlossplatz, ☎ 08652-947-980, www.haus-bayern.com, was a monastery from the 12th century up to secularization in 1803. Thereafter, it became a royal residence and still has the art collection of Crown Prince Rupprecht. The interior can only be seen on a 50-minute guided tour that includes some 30 rooms. Most are furnished with Renaissance or Baroque furniture and art. Opening hours are Sunday to Friday from Pentecost to mid-October, 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm. From mid-October to Pentecost, it is open weekdays only for tours at 11 am and 2 pm. Admission is €7.

Very popular with children is the **Salzbergwerk** (Salt Mines), Bergwerkstraße 83, ☎ 08652-6002, www.salzbergwerk-berchtesgaden.de. The mine was in operation from 1517 and brought great wealth to the region. Tours include a barge ride on the underground salt lake. It measures 100 by 30 m/328 by 100 ft and is illuminated. Opening hours are daily from May to mid-October, 9 am to 5 pm. From mid-October to April, it is open from Tuesday to Saturday, noon to 3 pm. Admission is €12.50.

Maria Gern has a famous **Wahlfahrtskirche** (Pilgrims' Church), seen on all postcards and brochures in the region. It was built in 1709 and has a rich interior. You reach it via narrow, but well signposted, country roads. Parking at the church is limited, but it is the setting that attracts visitors more than anything else. The interior is rich but usually fenced off and can be seen in minutes.

Obersalzberg

In the 1920s, following an early release from prison for his attempted coup d'état in Munich, Adolf Hitler settled in Obersalzberg outside Berchtesgaden. After he eventually came to power in 1933, the area became a second seat of government. His house, the Berghof, was enlarged and other senior party leaders acquired properties in the area. Locals, including party faithful, were forced off their land.

Virtually all the buildings were destroyed by the Allies during or shortly after the war. However, a **Documentation Center Obersalzberg**, Salzbergstraße 41, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-947-960, www.obersalzbergweg.de, opened in 1999 to explain the role of the area in the Nazi regime. Unfortunately, virtually all the information is in German only, although the photos and videos are graphic and shocking. English audio guides are available. Very interesting is the bunker complex that was constructed to protect the leadership during air raids. A vast network of tunnels gave access to the outlying properties. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from April to October, 9 am to 5 pm, and from November to March, 10 am to 3 pm. Admission is €2.50. A large parking lot is available at the center and Bus 38 from Berchtesgaden station stops here too.

At the instigation of Martin Bormann, a "diplomatic house" was erected on the Kehlstein peak (1,834 m/6,015 ft) as a 50th-birthday gift from the party to Adolf Hitler. In German, this building, with absolutely stunning views, is known as the **Kehlsteinhaus**, www.kehlstein.info. In English, it is generally called the **Eagle's Nest** – a term never used by the Nazis. Hitler never liked the place much. Officially, he thought the elevator mechanism on top of the building would act as a lightening rod. Unofficially, some thought he suffered from vertigo, while there is also evidence that he thought the British Royal Air Force might bomb it. Ironically, when the Berghof complex was bombed at the end of the war, the bombers either thought the Eagle's Nest was too unimportant to strike, or it was so small that they missed it.

The Eagle's Nest

It is possible to hike up to the top, but it is easier to take the shuttle bus from behind the Documentation Center. The access road, open only to the shuttle buses, is an incredible feat of engineering. From the bottom, it climbs 700 m/2,296 ft over a distance of 6½ km/3.9 miles, making only a single turn in the process. From the upper bus station, a horizontal tunnel was carved 124 m/407 ft though solid rock; then an elevator sweeps you up another 124 m/407 ft in 41 seconds. The elevator is the original one from the 1930s. The whole project was completed in an impressive 13 months – Bormann never had to bother with accounting or budgets.

At the top, in the former diplomatic guesthouse, is a **restaurant**, ☎ 08652-2969, serving mostly local dishes. The views from here are magnificent and you can take a short hike to the peak as well. Note the absence of safety railing – in Germany not falling off a mountain remains the individual's responsibility.

It is necessary to make return reservations on arrival at the top bus station. Ignore the recommended times; even if you have a drink at the top, it is hard to spend more than an hour. Opening hours are mid-May to October, but they depend on snowfall. The bus and elevator round-trip cost €12.

The only sanctioned tours of the Kehlsteinhaus are in English and offered by **Eagle's Nest Tours**, Vorbergstrasse 12, 83471 Schönau, ☎ 08652-64-971, www.eagles-nest-tours.com. The tour usually departs daily at 1:30 pm from the Berchtesgaden Visitors' Center. Reservations are required.

Königssee

In 1978, the **Alpine National Park** was formed to protect the natural beauty of the area around the Königssee and Watzmann peak in Schönau. Nothing at the entrance to the park reveals any of the beauty that lies beyond the tollgate-like entrance, the enormous parking lot, and the street of kitsch souvenir shops that leads to the lake.

Facing page: Königsee with St Barholomä

Once at the water itself, things improve quickly. The **Königssee** (King's Lake) is Germany's cleanest lake, with water of drinking quality. Measuring eight km/4.8 miles long, up to 1.2 km/.7 miles wide, and 190 m/620 ft deep, it is almost fjord-like, and surrounded by mountains. The Watzmann peak rises 1,800 m/5,904 ft straight up from the lake to form a wall on the eastern shore. It is impossible to hike around the lake, since it is edged with sheer walls of rock in many places. Electric boats do tour the lake, with a round-trip taking two hours.

The most popular stop is at the **St Bartholomä** enclave, about halfway down the lake. The first **Wahlfahrtskirche St Bartholomä** (Pilgrims Chapel) was erected in 1134. This Romanesque church was converted to the present Baroque structure between 1698 and 1710. Its triple apse is one of the most photographed buildings in Germany. The best view of it is from the lake – all three round apses can be seen in equal proportion shortly before landing. It is also visible from several view points in the region such as Jenner and Kehlstein. The St Bartholomä enclave was a favored hunting area for the rulers of Berchtesgaden in the 18th century and the Bavarian royals in the 19th century. A popular hike is the two-hour round-trip to see the ice chapel. The enclave can only be reached by boat or by hiking across the lake when it occasionally freezes over in winter.

At the far end of the lake is the **Salet** stop. From here, it is a 15-minute hike to see the spectacularly located little **Obersee Lake**. Also visible from here are the 400-m/1,300-ft-high **Röthbach Waterfalls**.

Where to Eat

In the larger building attached to the Wahlfahrtskirche St Bartholomä chapel is the **St Bartholomä Historische Gaststätte**, 83471 Schönau am Königssee, ☎ 08652-964-937. It serves traditional hearty food and has space for 370, with an additional 540 seats outdoors. (€-€€)

Ramsau

Ramsau is a lovely, traditional mountain village with wooden houses, guided streams, all set-off against the Alps. The **Kirche Ramsau** (Church) is beautifully located, similar to Maria Gern, and one of the most often photographed buildings in the region. The church dates from 1512. Parking is no problem.

The **Hintersee** just outside the town is a popular lake for swimming and rowing in summer. The area is particularly popular with hikers and the forest east of the lake is known as the *Zauberwald* (enchantment forest). In winter, wild animals from the national park are fed here. These winter-feedings are popular with children and take place about a 15-minute walk from the parking lot at the Hintersee. Exact dates and times are available from the tourism office.

The Kirche Ramsau

Cultural Events

The **Bad Reichenhaller Philharmonie**, www.bad-reichenhaller-philharmonie.de, a full 40-member symphony orchestra, performs in the Kurgarten daily, except Monday, at 3:30 pm. It also gives many other performances throughout the year.

The **Alpenklassik**, www.vereinalpenklassik.de, is a series of concerts held annually in August at various venues in Bad Reichenhall.

Each spring, the cattle of the region still go up the mountain to dedicated meadows, the Alms. A major event is the **Almabtrieb**, when the cows return to the valley. Cows are dressed in colorful headgear that can be up to 1½ m/five ft high. The headgear is a sign of good fortune. After a death or severe bad luck in the family, or on the Alm, no decorations are used. The dates depend on the weather, but usually are between mid-September and the end of October.

Shopping

Lederhosen and other *Trachten* (traditional dress) can be bought from **Franz Stanassinfer**, Marktplatz 10, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-2685.

Schönauer Krippenställe, Vorbergstraße 23, 83471 Schönau, ☎ 08652-5375, www.weihnachtskrippen-online.de, produces and sells Christmas nativity scenes and other wood-carved items.

Adventures

On Foot

Countryside Hikes

Berchtesgaden has 200 km/120 miles of marked hiking routes. Good hiking maps are available from the tourist office and many hotels. Along the routes are huts and restaurants – opening times are available from the tourist information office or at www.huettenwirte.com.

Some of the most popular hikes are in the **Alpen National Park**, which includes the Königssee area and the Watzmann peak. The park has excellent hiking paths, but it is strictly forbidden, and dangerous, to wander off the marked trails.

From the National Park parking lot in Schönau, a one-hour circular route leads to the **Malerwinkel** (Painter's Corner), from where beautiful panoramas of the lake as well as St Bartholomä can be enjoyed.

From St Bartholomä, it is a two-hour round-trip walk to the **Ice Chapel**. The shape and size of the chapel depends on the season.

Several interesting trails lead from the stops along the **Jennerbahn cable car route**. These range from easy one-hour walks to challenging eight-hour hikes in the Alpine peaks. Walking downhill from the middle station takes around 90 minutes.

A popular long-distance hiking route is the 160-km/100-mile **Alpen-Weitwanderweg**. It is divided into seven stages of between five and eight hours each. If the total route is done, an altitude difference of 5,200 m/17,000 ft is covered in about 40 hours. The route is partly in Austria. It is open from May to October.

View of the Königsee from Jenner Mountain

The tourism office in **Schönau**, Rathausplatz 1, ☎ 08652-1760, www.koenigssee.com, leads guided hikes, usually on Tuesday mornings. Other guided hikes are also available – schedules are available from any tourist office in the region.

Mountaineering

Bergschule Watzmann, Am Forstamt 3, 83486 Ramsau, ☎ 08657-711, www.bergschule-watzmann.de, offers a wide range of mountain climbs and walks in the region. Climbs for families and children are also available.

Outdoor Club, Am Gmundberg 7, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-97-760, www.outdoor-club.de, offers guided climbs of the Watzmann and other peaks. Overnight hikes, with sleeping in mountain huts, are also available.

On Wheels

By Car

Most of the Berchtesgaden area is fantastic to drive through, with marvelous views of the mountains. However, the **Roßfeld Panorama Straße** (Panorama Road) is in a class of its own. It reaches an altitude of 1,600 m/5,248 ft, making this the highest pub-

Berchtesgaden National Park

lic road in Germany. En route, ample parking areas allow drivers to enjoy the marvelous panoramas safely. The road is open all year, but a small toll is payable. The road starts a few miles past the Documentation Center Obersalzberg and ends near Berchtesgaden.

By Bicycle

The area is famous for its mountains and it should come as no surprise that cycling routes are available, with altitude differences of up to 2,000 m/6,500 ft. However, it is also possible to enjoy cycling on relatively flat routes. Good cycling maps are available from the tourist information offices or bookstores.

Many hotels and holiday homes have bicycles for guests. Rentals are also available from **M&R Brandner**, Bergwerkstraße 52, Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-1434; **M&R Brandner**, Im Tal 64, Ramsau, ☎ 08657-790; and **BGD Radl Verleih**, Am Rehwinkl 3, Schönau, ☎ 08652-96-870, delivers to hotels. Bicycles may be taken on local trains at no charge.

By Bus

Many a German spouse or partner with no interest in hiking, skiing, or other outdoor pursuits has been forced to accompany their better-halves to Berchtesgaden. People who tire of the mountains quickly will be happy to know that a wide range of day-trips are available to other destinations. **Omnibus Biller**, Zentrale Schönau, ☎ 08652-95-660, and **Bus Schweiger**, Vorbergstraße 5, Schönau, ☎ 08652-2525, www.bus-schwaiger.de, operate day-trips with different destinations most days of the week. The most popular destinations include Salzburg, Munich, and Chiemsee, but trips to Vienna and even Venice are also possible.

Eagle's Nest Tours, Vorbergstrasse 12, 83471 Schönau, ☎ 8652-64-971, www.eagles-nest-tours.com, offers an English-language tour of Salzburg and the *Sound of Music* sights in the region. It usually runs Monday to Saturday from 8:30 am to 12:30 noon. Participation is restricted to eight persons and reservations are required.

In the Air

Hot-Air Ballooning

Hot-air balloon flights and tandem paragliding are offered by **Outdoor Club**, Am Gmundberg 7, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-97-760, www.outdoor-club.de.

Cable Cars

A popular cable car is the **Jennerbahn**, Jennerbahnstraße 18, Schönau, ☎ 08652-95-810, www.jennerbahn.de. In less than half an hour, two-seater gondolas lift passengers up to an altitude of 1,800 m/5,904 ft. A 10-minute walk leads to the top of the plateau and affords a view that includes 100 German and Austrian Alpine peaks. Walking down from the halfway station takes 90 minutes. The cable car operates daily from May to September, 9 am to 5 pm. The round-trip fare is €18.

The **Obersalzbergbahn**, ☎ 08652-2561, www.obersalzbergbahn.de, ascends to 1,000 m/3,280 ft above sea level. At this point there are several marked hiking paths, with little or no further variations in altitude. The car operates daily from 9 am to 5:20 pm. Round-trip journeys are €7.50.

Tandem Paragliding & Parachuting

The steep mountain cliffs make for excellent paragliding. Several companies offer tandem flights and parachuting: **Aero-Taxi Watzmann**, ☎ 0171-894-6394, www.aero-taxi.de; **Flieg mit Para-Taxi**, ☎ 08652-948-450; Gleitschirm-Taxi, ☎ 0171-314-2898; and **Tandem Flight Fun**, ☎ 0171-616-9048.

On Water

Boat Rental

Rowboats can be rented without reservations on the Königssee and Hintersee lakes.

Lake Boats

Bayerische Seenschifffahrt, ☎ 08652-963-618, www.bayerische-seenschifffahrt.de, has a fleet of 19 electric motorboats on the Königssee. Boats operate daily from May to late October, starting at 8 am and running at 30-minute intervals. From late October to April, boats depart at least hourly from 9:50 am onwards. Round-trip journeys to Salet are €13.80 and to St Barholomä €10.80. It is wise to take the earlier boats. In summer, discounts are offered for departures before 9 am. Note the final return time of the day – missing it either means spending the night in the open or paying an enormous fee to charter a special boat.

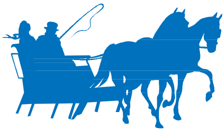
Occasionally, night cruises are available on the Königssee to St Bartholomä. The cruise includes dinner in the restaurant and a concert in the chapel.

Spas

Bad Reichenhall has numerous clinics using the saline waters for various cures but most visitors would be satisfied by a visit to the modern **Rupertus Therme**, ☎ 08651-606-101, www.rupertustherme.de. Water temperatures in the various pools range from 32 to 40°C/90 to 104°F and the salt content from two to 12%. Numerous saunas as well as health and beauty treatments are available. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 10 pm, closing at 8 pm on Sunday. Admission ranges from €8 for two hours to €15 (add €5 for saunas) for a full day.

With Horses

Horse-Drawn Carriages & Sleighs



Horse-drawn carriage rides are available from **Werner Zeininger**, Hochbahnstraße 13, 83471 Schönau, ☎ 08652-63-255, or from **Familie Koller**, Salzburger Straße 41, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-2360, www.kilianhof.de. **Familie Maul**, Am Rehwinkl 1, 83741 Schönau,

☎ 08652-61-441, offers nighttime rides, usually on Wednesdays at 7 pm from the Schönau tourism office.

On Snow & Ice

The Berchtesgaden area has 50 km/30 miles of Alpine ski slopes at 600 to 1,874 m/1,900 to 6,146 ft altitude. For cross-country skiers, 61 km/36 miles of trails are available, and winter hikers can enjoy up to 120 km/75 miles of cleared winter hiking paths.

For updates on actual snow conditions, call the **Schneetelefon** (snow telephone), ☎ 08652-967-297. The season is generally from December to April.

Alpine Skiing

The **Königssee-Jenner** ski area, ☎ 08652-95-810, www.jennerbahn.de, in Schönau can transport up to 3,500 skiers per hour. Around 11 km/6.6 miles of prepared slopes are available with lengths up to 3.1 km/1.9 miles and drops up to 600 m/2,000 ft. Most slopes are classified as intermediate. A day ski-pass costs about €25.

The **Roßfeld** ski area, ☎ 08652-3538, www.rossfeld.info, has the highest probability for natural snow of all skiing areas in the region. It is at 1,600 m/5,248 ft and is easily reached on public transportation. The area is popular with families as it has just over seven km/4.2 miles of beginners' level slopes and two km/1.2 miles of intermediate. The lifts operate daily from 10 am to 4 pm, with floodlit skiing on Wednesday from 6:30 to 9:30 pm. Day passes are €12.50.

The **Hochschwarzeck** ski area, ☎ 08567-368, www.jennerbahn.de/hsb.htm, in Ramsau is also popular with families. The four main slopes are between 500 and 2,500 m/1,600 and 8,200 ft – all rated beginners' level. The long tobogganing course is also popular. Rental equipment is available. The lifts operate daily from 9 am to 4 pm. Day passes are around €16.

Bobsledding

The bobsled course at Berchtesgaden was the world's first artificial ice course when it opened in 1969. It is 1,500 m/4,920 ft long with 18 turns and is still considered one of the most challenging in the world.

It is possible to hurtle down this course in a "Bob-Raft," which is less high-tech, and less slick-looking than a real bobsled. In the **Gästebob** (Guest Bob), three passengers join a professional in a raft for a 1,300 m/4,264-ft downhill ride, reaching speeds up to 85 km/h or 50 mph. Each ride is

€30. Get information and reservations through the **Verkehrsamt Schönau**, Rathausplatz, Schönau, ☎ 08652-1760.

On most weekends from November to February, it is also possible to be a passenger in a real four-seater bobsled with professional pilot and co-pilot supplied by **Rennbob-Taxi Königssee**, ☎ 08652-95-880. No running start, but everything else is the real thing. These rides cost €80.

Cross-Country Skiing

In **Schönau**, four cross-country skiing courses are available, ranging from two to four km/1.2 to 2.4 miles each. Ramsau has five courses between one and six km/one and 3.6 miles long. However, the best area for cross-country skiing is **Aschauer Weiher**, with eight courses ranging from two to nine km/1.2 to 5.4 miles. Some are classified very difficult and one is a skating route.

Ice Skating

The **Eishalle Berchtesgaden**, An der Schießstätte, ☎ 08652-61-405, is open during winter, from late September to April, on weekdays from 10 am to 12:30 pm and 2 to 4:30 pm, on weekends from 2 to 4 pm and 8 to 10 pm. Rental skates are available on-site. Admission is €3.

Ice skating is also allowed on the Hintersee and Böcklwieher lakes when sufficiently frozen.

Ski School & Equipment Rentals

Several ski schools (downhill and snowboarding) operate in the area – all listed below also rent out equipment. Five-day group courses, four hours per day, cost about €90 for adults.

Ski- und Snowboardschule Jenner-Königssee, Franz Graßl, ☎ 08652-66-710; **Skischule Schönau**, Skilift Kohlhiasl, Oberschönauerstraße, ☎ 08652-948-406, www.ski-schoenau.de; **Skischule Berchtesgaden**, Schornstraße 34, ☎ 08652-61-197.

Winter Hiking

Up to 120 km/75 miles of hiking routes are cleared to allow safe hiking in winter.

Where to Stay & Eat

Bad Reichenhall

Some of the best accommodations in the region are in Bad Reichenhall. The open border with Austria means that it is only minutes from Salzburg and therefore staying here is also a good option for visitors to the Mozart City.

See pages 50 and 52 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

Hotel Steigenberger Axelmannstein

The **Hotel Steigenberger Axelmannstein** is an excellent first-class grand hotel. It is beautifully located inside a large park with a small lake open to swimmers. Rooms are luxurious with all modern comforts. The stylish **Parkrestaurant** (€€-€€€), open for dinner only, serves international cuisine, while the more rustic **Axel-Stüberl** (€€) serves mainly local specialties. Salzburger Straße 2-4, 83435 Bad Reichenhall, ☎ 08651-770, fax 08651-5932, www.steigenberger.de. (€€€€)

The nearby **Parkhotel Luisenbad** is also located inside a park. It is a privately owned hotel with high service standards. Rooms are comfortable and chic. Several dining options are available, with the **Luisenbad** (€€-€€€) praised for its creative regional cuisine. Ludwigstraße 33, 83435 Bad Reichenhall, ☎ 08651-6040, fax 08651-62-928, www.parkhotel.de. (€€€)

Kurhotel Alpina

The **Kurhotel Alpina** is at the edge of town. It has pleasant rooms with cherry wood and oak furniture. Most have good mountain views. Adolf-Schmidt-Straße 5, 83435 Bad Reichenhall, ☎ 08651-9750, fax 08651-65-393, www.bad-reichenhall.de/hotels/alpina. (€€)

In the Nonn part of town, idyllically located at the edge of the forest on an elevation with excellent views, is the **Hotel Neu-Meran**. It is a privately managed hotel with high service standards. The building is a typical Alpine hotel, its balconies filled with geraniums in summer. All rooms face south and have grand views of the valley and the Alps. The Alpine-style **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves regional as well as international cuisine with strong Mediterranean influences. Nonn 94, 83435 Bad Reichenhall, ☎ 08651-4078, fax 08651-78-520, www.hotel-neumeran.de. (€€€-€€€)

Five km/three miles west of Bad Reichenhall, at the lovely Thumsee Lake, is the pleasant **Haus Seeblick**. It is a hotel with apartments, spread over three buildings. Rooms are nicely furnished. The area is peaceful and has many adventure options. Thumsee 10, 83435 Bad Reichenhall-Karlstein, ☎ 08651-98-630, fax 08651-986-388, www.hotel-seeblick.de. (€€)

Berchtesgaden

InterContinental Resort Berchtesgaden

The fabulously luxurious **InterContinental Resort Berchtesgaden** recently opened in the valley below the Kehlstein peak. It sits where the homes of Hitler's deputy, Martin Bormann, and Hermann Goering once stood, on land owned by Goering. The hotel is modern with stylish, clean lines and a range of exclusive spa facilities; most are open 24 hours per day. Rooms are large and very luxurious, with designer furniture and ultra-modern bathrooms. All have fine views too. The three **restaurants** (€€-€€€€) in the hotel are all stylish and serve international cuisine. Hintereck 1, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-97-550, fax 08652-9755-9999, www.ichotels.com. (€€€€)

The **Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten** is at the edge of town close to the station. Rooms have wooden furniture. South-facing rooms have excellent views of the mountains. The **Hubertusstuben Restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves local and international dishes. Maximilianstraße 20, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-9520, fax 08652-5029,

InterContinental Resort Berchtesgaden

www.berchtesgaden.com/vier-jahreszeiten. (€€-€€€)

The **Hotel Rosenbichl** is outside town in the National Park. The comfortable rooms are modern and have great views. The whole hotel is non-smoking. The hotel operates its own ski school. Rosenhofweg 24, 83471 Berchtesgaden, ☎ 08652-94-400, fax 08652-944-040, www.hotel-rosenbichl.de. (€€)

The **Alpenhotel Denninglehen** is quietly located along the Roßfeld ring road and has spectacular views. (It is at 900 m/2,952 ft, as opposed to Berchtesgaden's altitude of 540 m/1,771 ft.) Rooms are spacious, pleasant, and partly furnished with traditional hand-painted furniture. The rustic dinner-only **restaurant** (€€) serves international cuisine. Am Priesterstein 7, 83471 Berchtesgaden-Oberau, ☎ 08652-5085, fax 08652-64-710, www.denninglehen.de. (€€-€€€)

Schönau am Königssee

Hotel Alpenhof is beautifully located at 700 m/2,296 ft in a green area with meadows and forests. Most of the rooms have balconies and mountain views. Richard-Vos-Straße 30, 83471 Schönau, ☎ 08652-6020, fax 08652-64-399, www.alpenhof.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Hotel Alpenhof

Hotel Zechmeisterlehen is at the edge of town, surrounded by a large meadow. Most rooms have balconies and mountain views. The hotel has an indoor and outdoor swimming pool. Wahlstraße 35, 83471 Schönau, ☎ 08652-9450, fax 08652-945-299, www.zechmeisterlehen.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Stolls Hotel Alpina** is in a quiet spot inside a large garden. It is a typical Alpine resort building and has comfortable rooms. The rustic **restaurant** (€-€€) serves regional and international dishes. Dinner reservations are recommended. Ulmenweg 14, 83471 Schönau, ☎ 08652-65-090, fax 08652-61-608, www.stolls.hotl-alpina.de. (€€)

Waldhauser-Bräu Restaurant, Walshauserstraße 12, ☎ 8652-948-943, is a rustic spot with a wide-ranging menu, from hearty local dishes to Chinese and Spanish favorites. On weekdays, it is open for dinner only, but from 10 am on weekends. (€-€€)

Ramsau

The **Berghotel Rehlegg** has excellent views of the mountains from its location in the idyllic town of Ramsau. Rooms are furnished with

Berghotel Rehlegg

country-style furniture and all have balconies. The stylish **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves creative regional dishes. Holzengasse 16-18, 83486 Ramsau, ☎ 08657-98-840, fax 08657-988-4444, www.rehlegg.de. (€€-€€€€)

A lovely place for lunch or coffee is just uphill along the main road from the church. **Gasthof Oberwirt**, Im Tal 86, ☎ 08657-225, is a traditional Alpine restaurant with solid wooden furniture. Hearty local specialties are served. The cakes are very good too and the portions huge. (‡-€€)

Youth Hostels

The **DJH Berchtesgaden** occupies two buildings in a park-like area of the suburb of Strub. The large 300-bed hostel has fine views of the Watzman. It is a 25-minute walk from the station, or use RVO bus and get off at Kaserne Strub. The hostel is closed from November to just after Christmas. Struberberg 6, 83483 Bischofswiesen, ☎ 08652-94-370, fax 08652-943-737.

Camping

There are a surprising number of campgrounds in the Berchtesgaden vicinity. All the sites listed below are open year-round, but some require prior reservations in the winter season.

Camping Allweglehen is one of the best, with excellent facilities. It has 130 lots on seven levels with marvelous views. 83471 Bechtesgaden-Salzberg, ☎ 08652-2396, fax 08652-63-503, www.alpen-camping-allweg.de.

Camping Grafenlehen also has excellent facilities and 180 lots. It is on the beautiful Königssee. Königsseer Fußweg 71, 83471 Berchtesgaden-Königssee, ☎ 08652-4140, fax 08652-690-767, www.camping-grafenlahen.de.

In the same area is **Camping Mühlleiten**, with good facilities and 100 lots. 83471 Berchtesgaden-Königssee, ☎ 08652-4584, fax 08652-69-194, www.camping-muehlleiten.de.

Ostbayern (Eastern Bavaria)

IN THIS CHAPTER

- **Lower Bavaria** 212
  - **Landshut** 212
- **Danube Valley** 221
  - **Ingolstadt** 223
  - **Kelheim** 230
  - **Regensburg** 237
  - **Straubing** 247
  - **Deggendorf** 252
  - **Passau** 256

This is a diverse area with numerous attractions for travelers interested in history, culture, architecture, and outdoor activities.

Much of Ostbayern is part of the original heartland of the Wittelsbach Duchy of Bavaria. Their original capitals of Kelheim, Ingolstadt, and Landshut are all here. To the north, the Oberpfalz (Upper Palatinate) was for centuries the property of the Wittelsbach branch residing in the Palatinate on the Rhine. The Bishopric of Regensburg controlled large areas but the city of Regensburg itself managed to become a true Free City. The Bishopric of Passau went from the largest to the smallest in the German-speaking world. Several smaller independent monastery areas and secular counties added spice to history but by the end of the Napoleonic era, the whole region was undisputedly part of the Kingdom of Bavaria.

We start this chapter with **Landshut**, a former Bavarian capital with its lovely historic town core. The close proximity to Munich makes Landshut an ideal day-trip from the capital. The surrounding countryside of **Niederbayern** (Lower Bavaria) is mostly flat and, although beautiful, struggles to compete with the more interesting landscapes elsewhere.

Ostbayern's geography is dominated by the **Danube River**. The most important historical cities are on the river and it contributes not only to transportation but also to industry and tourism here. The most important city in the region is **Regensburg**, the fourth-largest in Bavaria. It is a tourism powerhouse, far too often overlooked by foreign travelers. It was spared most of the devastations of World War II and has the best-preserved historical core of any large city in Germany. Its economic golden age was in the High Middle Ages, meaning its best buildings are older than those of Nürnberg and Augsburg. It remained politically important right up to the end of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation. If you have only one day for Ostbayern, spend all of it here. **Passau**, farther downstream at the border with Austria, has a lovelier natural setting. The Inn and the Ilz flow into the Danube here to make the Danube from here on a truly large and important river. The town itself is mostly Baroque. The cathedral has the largest pipe organ in the world.

Information Sources

For administrative purposes, Ostbayern is divided into Oberpfalz and Niederbayern. For tourism purposes, the area is further divided into smaller areas but, fortunately, they all use the same tourist center, the **Tourismusverband Ostbayern**, Luitpoldstraße 20, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-585-390, fax 0941-585-3939, www.ostbayern-tourismus.de.

Niederbayern (Lower Bavaria)

The rather clumsily, but accurately, named area of *Niederbayern zwischen Donau und Inn* (Lower Bavaria between the Danube and Inn) is mostly flat, with fertile agricultural soil. The main tourism interest is the Isar Valley, especially the historical town of Landshut.

Landshut

Landshut is beautifully situated in the Isar Valley, 70 km/43 miles downstream from Munich. In 1180, when the Wittelsbach family received the Duchy of Bavaria, they found that all the major towns in the area such as Regensburg, Freising, and Passau were firmly under the control of the local bishops. Sharing a town with a bishop was out of the question, so the Wittelsbachs founded a string of towns to establish their control over Bavaria. Landshut was one of these towns and, even here, there were some violent clashes with the bishop of Regensburg, who controlled the area north of the Isar. Landshut developed below Burg Trausnitz, which was built from 1204 as an important family seat of the Wittelsbachs.

During the reign of Otto the Illustrious (1231-55), Landshut formally became the capital of Bavaria. Following the division of the duchy in 1255, it served as the capital of the new Duchy of Bavaria-Landshut and, for the next three centuries, it would overshadow the other Bavarian capitals, Ingolstadt and Munich. Following the re-unification of the Bavarian duchies in 1505, Landshut became a favored second residence, but it gradually slipped behind Munich in favor and glamour. Like so many other Bavarian towns, Landshut never recovered from the devastation of the Thirty Years' War and, as a result, its most impressive buildings are Gothic and Renaissance in style, rather than the later fashionable Baroque.

Landshut is particularly proud that its beer had been produced to the specifications of Bavaria's famous *Reinheitgebot* (Purity Law) since 1409, more than a century before the law was formally proclaimed in 1516. Formally, George the Rich declared in 1493 that all beer in Niederbayern could only contain barley, hops, and water. The 1516 law extended the order to all of Bavaria and in 1871 to the whole of Germany.

Information Sources

Tourist Office

Amt für Marketing und Tourismus, Altstadt 315, 84028 Landshut, ☎ 0871-922-050, fax 0871-89-275, www.landshut.de.

Getting Around

Landshut has excellent rail connections to Munich with at least two trains per hour taking about 50 minutes. The station is a 30-minute walk north of the Old Town. Very frequent bus connections to Altstadt are available.

Landshut is a 30-minute drive from Munich Airport, making it an ideal first or last stop for travelers using Bavaria's premier airport.

Sightseeing

Old Town

Most of the sights in Old Town Landshut are in Altstadt (Old Town) and Neustadt (New Town), which in Landshut refer to two wide streets, rather than districts, running roughly parallel to the Isar. **Altstadt** is the more interesting, with many stepped-gabled façades facing the street. Most buildings here are 15th and 16th century but many received updated façades in the Baroque and neo-Classical periods. The street is unusually wide since it was originally used as a market square.

Altstadt is anchored on each end with a Gothic church designed by Hans von Burghausen. At the northern end, facing the Isar, is the **Spitalkirche Heilige-Geist** (Hospice Church of the Holy Spirit), Heilige-Geist-Gasse. This triple-nave hall church was erected between 1407 and 1461. The tower is oddly positioned over the transept. The intricate fan vaulting is worth seeing but the interior is generally only open in conjunction with exhibitions and church services.

Halfway down Altstadt is the **Rathaus** (Town Hall). At its core are three Gothic buildings from 1380, 1452, and 1503 but the neo-Gothic façade was added only in 1882. During this same period, the large wall paintings of the Landshut Wedding were painted in the Prunksaal (Reception Hall) and inspired the reenactment of the wedding – see *Festivals*. The Prunksaal is open weekdays between 2 and 3 pm. Admission is free.

Across the road, note the façade of the **Pappenberger Haus**, Altstadt 81. It is one of the most impressive private residences from the 15th century. Adjacent is the Renaissance **Stadtresidenz** (Town Palace), Altstadt 79, ☎ 0871-924-110, www.schloesser.bayern.de. It is in two distinct parts. Facing the street, with a neo-Classical façade added at the end of the 18th century, is the **Deutscher Bau** (German Building), a relatively simple Renaissance palace commissioned by Ludwig X in 1536. However, following a trip to Italy, the duke imported Italian craftsman in 1537 to tag a three-wing Italian Renaissance palace onto the existing palace. This **Italienischer Bau** (Italian Building) is much more elaborate and has a lovely courtyard reminiscent of Italy. It was the first Italian Renaissance palace on German soil. The rooms have beautiful frescoes of mostly mythological scenes. The interior can only be seen on a guided tour Tuesday to Sunday from 9 am to 6 pm from April to September and 10 am to 4 pm from October to March. Admission is €3.

At the south end of Altstadt is the **Stiftsbasilika St Martin** (St Martin's Basilica). Rather uniquely for this region, it is Gothic inside and out. It was built over a period of more than a century, from 1385 to 1500, and several builder masters were involved, including Hans von Burghausen. The tower, at 131 m/430 ft, is the highest brick structure in the world. The interior is cathedral-like in its dimensions. The nave is 92 m/302 ft long and 28.8 m/94 ft high. Note the crucifix hanging in the choir. It is late 15th century, probably by Michael Erhart from Ulm, with a 5.8-m/19-ft body and an arm span of 5.4 m/17.7 ft. The Gothic sandstone high altar – long covered by a Baroque structure – and the chancel are the originals from around 1424. The church is open daily from 7:30 am and closes at 5 pm from October to March and at 6:30 pm from April to September. It is also closed on Monday and Friday between 10 am and 3 pm.

Stiftsbasilika St Martin

One block south is the start of Neustadt. The street name indicates that it is newer than the adjacent Altstadt but here "new" implies second half of the 13th century! At the south end is the **Jesuitenkirche St Ignatius** (Jesuit Church), Spiegelgasse, without tower or decorative façade. It was built by Augsburg architect Johannes Holl. The barrel-vaulted interior is an early example of typical Bavarian Baroque. The impressive Baroque high altar was donated by Elector Maximilian I.

About halfway up Altstadt, turn off onto Regierungsstraße, which leads to the government district. Since 1839, the government of Niederbayern has had its seat here in a former Dominican monastery. The former monastery church, **St Blasius**, Regierungsplatz, is one of the earliest large brick Gothic churches in Bavaria. It was built in 1271-1386 and has typical style features of the Dominican order such as a vaulted choir but a flat ceiling in the nave. However, the main reason to visit is to see the Rococo interior done by Johann Baptist Zimmermann in the mid-18th century. It has some breathtaking frescoes and stuccowork. The neo-Classical façade was added in 1805.

Burg Trausnitz

Burg Trausnitz (castle), Burg Trausnitz 168, ☎ 0871-924-110, www.schloesser.bayern.de, on a hill southeast of the Old Town, has been the seat of the Wittelsbach family since construction started in 1204. From these early years, the entrance gateway, the keep, Wittelsbacher Turm (tower), and part of the Palast (palace) survived. The castle was extended several times, with notable defenses added in the 15th century. Afterwards, the family moved to the Stadtresidenz and, once the duchy came to be ruled from Munich only, the castle declined in importance. However, when Wilhelm V (1579-97) lived here in the mid-16th century before taking the throne, he added an Italian wing with a double-storey loggia and converted some of the

Burg Trausnitz

Gothic interior into a more contemporary Renaissance style. Much of the interior were lost in a fire in 1961.

The interior can only be seen on guided tours. Highlights include the original **Burgkapelle St Georg** (Castle Chapel St George), various reception rooms, and the **Narrentreppe** (Fools' Staircase), which is decorated with life-size wall paintings of the Commedia dell'Arte by Padovano in 1578. Much of the Italian wing, destroyed by fire, was similarly decorated.

The **Kunst- und Wunderkammer** (Art & Wonders Collection Museum) opened in the castle in 2004. Similar to the curiosity collections that were popular with nobility during the Renaissance and beyond, it is an eclectic collection of art and curiosities amassed by the Wittelsbachs, ranging from scientific instruments to stuffed crocodiles and exotica imported from foreign colonies.

Opening hours are daily from April to September from 9 am to 6 pm and October to March from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission to the castle and the museum are €4 each or €6 to both.

The shortest route from the Old Town to Burg Trausnitz is via the steep stairway along Alte Bergsrraße. The inclines are more gentle and the approach more interesting via the Hofgarten (Court Garden).

Abtei Seligenthal

About 10 minutes walk from the Heilige Geist Spital, on the left bank of the Kleine Isar, is the **Zisterzienserinnen-Abtei Seligenthal** (Cistercian Monastery), Bismarckplatz 14, ☎ 0871-8210, www.seligenthal.de. This still-working monastery, with about 60 nuns in residence, has a very interesting church. The original Romanesque building of 1259 received a Rococo makeover inside and out during 1730s, courtesy of court builder master Johann Baptist Gunetzrhainer, as well as Johann Baptist Zimmermann, who did the marvelous stuccowork and painted the frescoes. In the crypt are the graves of some 40 Wittelsbachers who died between 1259 and 1579, including Ludwig X who built the Stadtresidenz.

Also in the monastery complex is the **Afrakapelle**, a Romanesque-Gothic chapel. It contains important wooden statues of the early Wittelsbach dynasty. Two painted sculptures of Duke Ludwig I, who was murdered in Kelheim, and his wife Ludmilla, who founded the monastery here, are surrounded by 26 statues of other nobles. They date from around 1320.

Festivals

THE LANDSHUTER HOCHZEIT

The current Landshuter Wedding Festival

One of the largest festivals of the late Middle Ages was the Landshuter Hochzeit (Landshut Wedding) in 1475 that saw the betrothal of the later Duke of Bavaria-Landshut, George the Rich (1479-1503), and Princess Jadwiga, daughter of the king of Poland. In addition to Emperor Friedrich III and his successor Maximilian I, as well as the Bavarian and Polish nobility, some 10,000 people attended the accompanying parties and tournaments. The festival lasted for weeks. According to contemporary reports, the bride cried so much upon leaving the church that her face could hardly be recognized. Like the wedding, the marriage ended in tears – at least for the princess. She bore George two daughters but all three sons died early. He banished her to a monastery and lived the highlife himself, spending time with women and activities unsuitable for a noble prince. Upon his death in 1503, his cousin Duke Albrecht IV the Wise (1465-1508) incorporated Bavaria-Landshut into the Duchy of Bavaria-Munich.

The Landshuter Wedding Festival

The unveiling of large wall paintings in the Rathaus commemorating the **Landshuter Hochzeit** (Landshut Wedding Festival), www.landshuter-hochzeit.de, caused such a sensation that it was decided in 1903 to restage the wedding with a folk festival and parade in period costume. The festival is currently held every four years (next is 2009, 2013) over a period of four weeks in June and July. The highlight is a parade of around 2,300 locals in period dress. The folk festival also involves period music, a knights' tournament, and a play.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

The **tourist office** conducts two-hour guided town walks on Saturday at 3 pm from May to October and at 2 pm from November to April.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

The **Isarradweg** (Isar Cycling Route), www.isarradweg.de, is a 264-km/164-mile route that closely follows the flow of the Isar River from Scharnitz near Mittenwald via Munich to the Danube. It is therefore a relatively easy route with no significant inclines. The way is well marked but not always paved, making it unsuitable for racing bikes but fine for any other types without narrow tires. Stage four is the 60 km/37 miles from Ismaning to Landshut; add 15 km/10 miles if setting out from Munich's Englischer Garten. Stage five is the 67 km/42 miles from Landshut to Plattling, where the route splits for stage six, which is either 10 km/six miles to Deggendorf or the same distance to the confluence of the Isar and the Danube just south of Deggendorf. Many cyclists return to Plattling for its good railway connections to other towns along the Danube.

Bicycle rentals are available in **Landshut** from **Fahrradverleih Landshut**, ☎ 0871-143-8153, or **Radl-Station am Bahnhof**, ☎ 0871-143-8149; in **Deggendorf** from **Zweirad Salmannsberger**, Pferdemarkt 18, ☎ 0991-30-440; and in **Plattling** from **Fahrradgeschäft Stadler**, Straubinger Straße 3a, ☎ 09931-907-662.

Where to Stay & Eat

See pages 50 and 52 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

The very modern **Lindner Hotel Kaiserhof** is on the left bank of the Isar, across from the Old Town. The bright bedrooms have comfortable, contemporary furniture; many have river and Old Town views. Business rooms are slightly bigger and better furnished than the standard rooms. Hotel guests may use the sauna, a small gym, as well as bicycles. The hotel is popular with business travelers but becomes an especially good option when prices drop on quiet days. Papiererstraße 2, 84034 Landshut, ☎ 0871-68-70, fax 0871-687-403, www.lindner.de. (€€-€€€€)

Lindner Hotel Kaiserhof

Much more romantic, and not only by name, is the **Romantik Hotel Fürstenhof**. It is a small hotel in a well-preserved Art Nouveau villa around a kilometer/half-mile from the Old Town center. Rooms are comfortable and romantic. The two restaurants are highlights of any visit to the hotel. The stylish, upmarket **Fürstenzimmer** (€€-€€€) serves international gourmet food in an original Art Nouveau room, while the emphasis in the rustic **Herzogstüberl** (€€) is on Bavarian food. Michelin-star chef André Greul conducts cooking courses on some weekends. Stethaimer Straße 3, 84034 Landshut, ☎ 0871-92-550, fax 0871-925-544, www.fuerstenhof.la. (€€€)

Romantik Hotel Fürstenhof

Hotel Schloss Schönbrunn is in a former 17th-century mansion and annex building three km/1.9 miles from the town center. Rooms have all modern facilities. The rustic, yet stylish **Tafernwirtschaft** (€-€€€) serves a wide range of food from local specialties to classical dishes. Schönbrunn 1, 84036 Landshut, ☎ 0871-95-220, fax 0871-952-2222, www.hotel-schoenbrunn.de. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Goldene Sonne is conveniently located in the heart of the Old Town. The history of the hotel goes back to 1400 but the yellow, gabled building is somewhat newer. The rooms are spacious, with modern, stylish furniture. Some have exposed beams, while most have fine views of the historic Old Town. The **restaurant** (€€) serves mostly local cuisine and seasonal salads. Neustadt 520, 84028 Landshut, ☎ 0871-92-530, fax 0871-925-3350, www.goldene-sonne.de. (€€-€€€)

Gasthof zur Insel has a lovely location on the island in the Isar River, surrounded by parks yet only two minutes walk to the Old Town. Rooms are fairly spacious but functional, with typical Bavarian country-house furniture. The rustic **restaurant** (€€) serves local cuisine but has a large fish and vegetarian selection. Badstraße 16, 84028 Landshut, ☎ 0871-923-160, fax 0871-923-1636, www.insel-landshut.de. (€€)

The **Bernlochner**, Ländtorstraße 2-5, ☎ 0871-89-990, is inside the Landshuter Theater. It serves international and local dishes in a traditional, somewhat formal setting. (€€-€€€)

Altstadt is lined with several pleasant cafés but only **Gaststätte Ainmiller**, Altstadt 195-197, ☎ 0871-21-163, has been in business since 1609. It is at the southern end of the Old Town, just past St Martin and below Burg Trausnitz. The rustic locale looks the part with a Late Gothic façade and wood-paneled interior. The food is unashamedly Bavarian but has a large vegetarian selection. (€-€€)

Youth Hostel

The **DJH Landshut** is between the Old Town and Burg Trausnitz. It is a 40-minute hike from the station or take Bus 1, 3, or 6 toward the

Altstadt. The hostel is closed for a few weeks over Christmas and New Year. Richard-Schirrmann-Weg 6, 84028 Landshut, ☎ 0871-23-449, fax 0871-274-947.

Camping

Campingplatz Landshut/Mitterwöhr is beautifully located at the northern end of the island in the Isar. Facilities are fairly basic but modern. The site is open year-round and has 100 lots. It can be reached by Bus 7, stop Campingplatz. Breslauer Straße 122, 84028 Landshut, ☎/fax 0871-53-366.

Danube Valley

The Danube (in German, *Die Donau*) is the second-longest river in Europe. Its source is at Donaueschingen in the Black Forest in the German state Baden-Württemberg and it flows into the Black Sea in Bulgaria. It is 2,860 km/1,777 miles long, of which 650 km/404 miles flow through Germany, including 425 km/264 miles in Bavaria. It is open to commercial traffic from Kelheim downstream.

For centuries, the Danube has been the lifeblood of a huge part of Bavaria. Archeological finds show prehistoric life (Kelheim) and Celtic settlements (Kelheim and Regensburg) before the Romans (Regensburg) made it the northern border of the province Raetia. After the Romans withdrew, the Bavarians mostly settled in the established settlements. A new golden age followed Christianization in the early Middle Ages with important bishoprics in Regensburg and Passau as well as the foundation of numerous monasteries. In 1180, the Wittelsbachs took control of the Duchy of Bavaria and soon founded several cities on the Danube (Kelheim, Ingolstadt, Straubing, and Deggendorf) to strengthen their control of this important trade route. Changing trade routes after the Middle Ages and the Thirty Years' War reduced the importance and wealth of many towns but the Baroque monasteries (Weltenburg, Metten) and town centers (Passau) show that the area was far from poor. With the notable exception of Ingolstadt, the area suffered relatively minor damage during World War II, leaving Regensburg with the best-preserved historical town center of any large city in Germany.

The Danube remains an important economic contributor to the region. Not only is it a valuable and reliable source of water, the river is also open to commercial traffic from Kelheim downriver. It plays an important role in both freight and leisure traffic. Tourism is an important source of income, with travelers enjoying both the cultural-historic attractions and the natural beauty of the valley as well as outdoor activities such as hiking, cycling and canoeing.

Ingolstadt is a major industrial city, with the headquarters of Audi located here, but there is an interesting Old Town at its core. **Kelheim**

is the base for boat excursions to the Danube gorge and Kloster Weltenburg as well as the entrance to the Main-Danube Canal. **Regensburg** is the most important city in the region with a wonderful medieval core and the most important Gothic church in Bavaria. **Straubing** was once the capital of the Duchy Straubing-Holland but is most famous for the regrettable incident when the ruling duke condemned his daughter-in-law as a witch and had her drowned in the Danube. **Deggendorf** is a fine base for exploring the Bavarian Forest and several noteworthy Baroque monasteries. Three-rivers-city **Passau** has a lovely natural setting, a Baroque Old Town, and the largest church organ in the world. If time is limited, give preference to Regensburg and Passau.

Getting Around

The valley generally has excellent transportation links. Smaller roads often follow the flow of the river but autobahns and major roads generally are straighter, less scenic routes.

ICE trains run hourly on the stretch between Regensburg and Passau (with a stop in Plattling), but regional trains are needed to visit smaller towns. Trains terminate or turn inland at Regensburg, requiring changes here to go farther up or downstream. For Kelheim, use Saal an der Donau station and, for Deggendorf, change at Plattling.

In summer, boat excursions are possible between Regensburg and Straubing or Deggendorf and Passau. The river is also popular, with longer cruises continuing farther into Germany along the Main-Danube Canal or downstream into Austria.

Adventures

The Danube is generally a slow-flowing river making its valley ideal for leisurely cycling tours. Not surprisingly, cycling routes run the full length of the river in Germany and beyond. The virtual absence of significant inclines makes the routes very suitable too for families with small children. Various routes are available.

The oldest route is the **Donau Radweg** (Danube Cycling Route), www.deutsche-donau.de, which follows the river from its source to Passau. The cycling route is 619 km/385 miles, the river 650 km/404 miles on this stretch. The Ingolstadt-Passau section is 270 km/168 miles and can be divided into three equal sections with stops in Regensburg and Deggensdorf, although most would prefer shorter sections with more sightseeing opportunities en route.

An alternative, which at times uses the same paths, is the **Via Danubia**, www.viadanubia.de. This 220-km/137-mile route from

Bad Gögging (near Kelheim) to Passau passes by many Roman and Celtic sites. It is usually divided into four roughly equal stretches with stops in Regensburg, Straubing, and Plattling (Deggendorf).

Ingolstadt

Ingolstadt's history goes back to at least the time of Charlemagne. Its favorable location on the Danube brought it riches through trade. It served as the capital of the short-lived Duchy of Bavaria-Ingolstadt from 1392 to 1447. From 1472 to 1800, it housed the Bavarian National University, now in Munich, which was particularly famous for its medical school. For centuries this was one of Germany's strongest fortress towns and, in addition to parts of the medieval town walls, neo-Classical fortifications survived, despite World War II bombings.

Ingolstadt is a modern, prosperous town that does not hide its riches. It is most famous for its oil refineries and as the headquarters of Audi. However, at the core of this city of around 115,000 people is a beautiful Old Town with buildings dating back to the 13th century.

BAVARIA'S BEER PURITY LAW OF 1516

In 1516, in an attempt to prevent scarcity in and competition between brewers and bakers for various grains, Duke Wilhelm IV declared in Ingolstadt the Reinheitsgebot (Purity Law). It stipulated that beer must only contain barley, hops, and water. Acceptance of the law was a Bavarian precondition for joining Bismarck's German Empire in 1871, leading to the demise of many specialty beers in other parts of Germany. The law was only replaced in the 1980s due to pressure from the European Union. Most German breweries still adhere to the original regulation (although wheat has since been added) due in part to German beer drinkers' insistence upon it as well as favorable tax treatment. Look for *Gebraut nach dem Deutschen Reinheitsgebot* (Brewed according to the German Purity Law) on applicable bottles and cans.

Tourist Office

Ingolstadt Tourismus, Wagnerwirtsgasse 2, 85049 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-305-3035, www.ingolstadt-tourismus.de.

Getting Around

The Hauptbahnhof (Main Railway Station) is two km/1.2 miles south of the Old Town. Buses 10, 11, 15, and 16 go to the Rathausplatz every five minutes or so. If on a local train, the

Nordbahnhof is closer to the Old Town center. Audi is five km/three miles north of the Old Town.

Sightseeing

Old Town

Ingolstadt's impressive, horseshoe-shaped Old Town is mostly on the north bank of the Danube. Much of the town walls, erected between 1362 and 1440, survive but most of the later fortifications have been torn down and replaced by parks. In 1823, Ludwig I entrusted Leo van Klenze to update the town's fortifications with neo-Classical redoubts. Some of these now house museums. Once inside the walls, you are a world and centuries away from the modern industrial sprawl.

The Old Town's skyline is dominated by several church spires as well as the **Neues Schloss** (New Palace). This huge, white building is in the far eastern side of the Old Town on the banks of the Danube. Duke Ludwig the Bearded, whose sister was married to the king of France, was a Francophile and, once familiar with the splendor of the French court, needed something more glamorous for his own duchy than the existing 13th-century palace. Work on the new palace started in 1418 and the strongly French-influenced Gothic style is unique in Bavaria. The palace has large, vaulted rooms very suitable for its present use as the **Bayerisches Armeemuseum** (Bavarian Army Museum), Neues Schloss, Paradeplatz 4, ☎ 0841-93-770, www.bayerisches-armeemuseum.de. The impressive display ranges from the Middle Ages to the 19th century and is particularly known for items captured in the wars against the Turks in 1682 as well as its display on the Thirty Years' War. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 8:45 am to 4:30 pm. Admission is €3.50 (includes the Reduit Tilly).

Neues Schloss

An annex of the Army Museum is across the river in the **Reduit Tilly** (Redoubt), Klenzepark. Very rare for Germany, this section covers the history and consequences of the First World War. Opening hours are similar to the main museum.

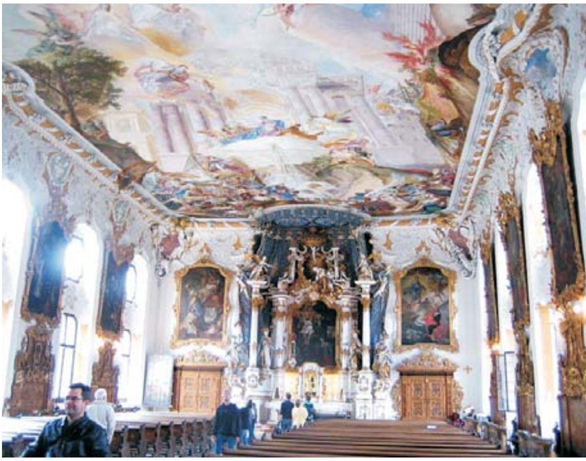
The original Wittelsbach residence was in what is now known as the **Herzogskasten** (Duke's Cupboard). The palace, erected in the 13th century and later expanded, became the duke's granary after completion of the Neues Schloss and has a huge characteristic Gothic gable. It is now a public library.

The Herzogskasten *(Brian Clontarf)*

The core of the **Altes Rathaus** (Old Town Hall) is 14th-century but it was remodeled in a neo-Renaissance style in 1882. Nearby is the **Moritzkirche**, the oldest church in town. The present building is mostly 14th-century Gothic but the tower is older Romanesque. In the choir is one of the best Rococo statues in Bavaria, Josef Friedrich Canzler's *Immaculata*. To the south of the church, almost looking like a second spire, is the Gothic **Pfeifturm** (Whistle Tower). It was the town's main watchtower.

A block north is the **Ickstatthaus**, Ludwigstraße. It is Ingolstadt's most ornate mansion. Its five-stories make this the tallest Baroque façade in Bavaria. Ludwig and Theresienstraße have more fine façades, but up Am Stein is the stark, Gothic **Franziskanerbasilika** (Franciscan Basilica). Inside are numerous monumental graves and epitaphs of notable citizens who died between 1472 and 1800.

One block down Johannesstraße is the **Tilly Haus** (House), where the famous general from the Thirty Years' War died of battle wounds in 1632. Across the road is one of the main attractions of Ingolstadt, the **Asamkirche Maria de Victoria**, Neubaustraße 1½, ☎ 0841-17-518. It is a seemingly simple church without portals or towers, built in 1732-36. All impressions of simplicity disappear upon entry. The interior is a Baroque masterpiece, often considered the most successful of the Asam brothers' joint projects. Cosmas Damian Asman's *Incarnation* ceiling fresco is the largest ever painted on a flat surface – 42 by 16 m/142 by 52 ft. Even more impressive than the size



Asamkirche Maria de Victoria *(Brian Clontarf)* are his illusionist techniques that ensure the correct perspective from all vantage points. He took less than eight weeks to complete the work. In a side room is a small museum with the 1708 monstrance of the Battle of Lepanto, often considered the most valuable monstrance in the world. Organ concerts are held in the church from May to September on Sunday at noon. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, November to February, 1 to 4 pm, and March to October, 9 am to noon and 1 to 5 pm; May to September also open on Monday. Admission is €2.

The **Liebfrauenmünster** (Minster of Our Dear Lady), Kreuzstraße, is the largest brick Gothic hall church in Bavaria. It was commissioned by Duke Ludwig the Bavarian at the same time as the Neues Schloss. The two unfinished towers are at an odd angle and resemble those of his castle. According to legend, 3,800 trees were used in the construction of the enormous roof. The interior is a mixture of mostly Gothic and Renaissance. Especially noteworthy is the ornate vaulting of the nave chapels. Hans Mielich's high altar was created in 1572 to commemorate the centennial of the university. This nine-m/30-ft-high altar incorporates 91 paintings. The stained-glass windows on the eastern side are to designs of Albrecht Dürer's studio. In the ambulatory is the grave of Johannes Eck, one of Luther's strongest opponents.

The Kreuztor *(Immanuel Giel)*

On the far end of Kreuzgasse is the 1385 **Kreuztor** (Cross Gate), the symbol of Ingolstadt. It is a fine sample of a Late Gothic town gate and the only one of the four originals that survived. From here, follow Jahnstraße along the town wall into the former university area.

The university was famous for its medical and science faculties. The Baroque Alte Anatomie (Former Anatomy Department) now houses the **Deutsches Medizinhistorisches Museum** (German Museum of Medical History), Anatomiestraße 18-20, ☎ 0841-305-1860. In addition to a wide range of medical equipment, cadavers, skeletons, and deformed organs are also on display. Some may find the clinical displays a bit off-putting. The courtyard has a lovely garden of medicinal herbs. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to noon and 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €3.

FRANKENSTEIN

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, in which a deranged scientist creates a human from spare body parts, is set in Ingolstadt. This is a reflection of the fame the local scientific community enjoyed during the 18th century.

The **Stadtmuseum** (City Museum), Auf der Schanz 45, ☎ 0841-305-1880, is close to the Kreuztor in one of the neo-Classical fortifications. It has a huge, eclectic collection of artifacts from the region. This ranges from a 3,000-year-old Celtic necklace to a 15th-century wooden model of the town and Swedish King Gustav's stuffed horse. The **Spielzeugmuseum** (Toy Museum) forms part of the Stadtmuseum and has a display of toys from the 18th to 20th centuries. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 5 pm, opening at 10 am on weekends. Admission is €2.50.

Ingolstadt has two interesting museums of modern art. The **Museum für Konkrete Kunst** (Concrete Art), Tränktorstraße 6-8, ☎ 0841-305-1871, has paintings and sculptures of all major proponents of this movement. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €3.

In 2000, the **Lechner Museum**, Esplanade, ☎ 0841-305-2250, www.lechner-museum.de, opened just outside the Old Town near the Neues Schloss in a former Audi workshop. It has changing exhibitions of industrial art with sculptures mostly of steel and stone. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm. Admission is €3.

Audi

Audi can trace its history back to 1899 when August Horch produced his first car. When Horch was forced out of the company he founded, he started producing cars under the Latin translation of his name, Audi. In 1932, Audi, Horch, DKW, and Wanderer merged to form Auto Union, best remembered for its pre-war racing cars. Its four-circle emblem is still used by Audi today. Following World War II, Auto Union moved its headquarters from East German Zwickau to Ingolstadt. Mercedes Benz acquired the company and produced cars using the DKW brand. During the 1960s, Mercedes sold the company to Volkswagen, who revived the Audi brand. It took Volkswagen three decades to improve the image of Audi to where it could compete with the other German luxury manufacturers BMW and Mercedes.

Five km/three miles north of the Old Town is Audi's headquarters and factory. The popular glass and steel visitor's center houses the **Museum Mobile**, Audi Welcome Service, Etinger Straße 40, ☎ 0800-283-4444, www.audi.de/foren. On display are about 100 vehicles from Audi's past and a number of design studies. Factory tours are available, mostly in the mornings on weekdays. Jazz concerts are frequently staged inside the complex. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 6 pm. Admission is €2.

Cultural Events

Ingolstadt has a busy cultural calendar. Classical music is popular, with many performances throughout the year. Free organ concerts are held in the **Asamkirche Maria de Victoria** Sunday at noon from late April to September. Also free is the concert series **MittwochKlassik um halb Sieben** (Wednesday Classics at 6:30 pm) in which artists from the region perform a varied program in the Musikzentrum Kamerariat. Organ concerts are often held in the **Liebfraumünster**. Information is available from Kulturamt, Auf der Schanz 39, 85049 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-305-1811.

Jazz is also very popular in Ingolstadt. The **Jazztage** (Jazz Days) are held annually at the end of October. Jazz is also frequently performed in the Audi Forum, ☎ 0841-893-7575.

Shopping

The most desirable souvenir from Ingolstadt is no doubt an **Audi**. Often special deals are available if you collect a locally manufactured car before it is shipped abroad. Contact your local Audi dealer for countries and models available under this scheme.

A new addition to the Bavarian shopping scene is **Ingolstadt Village Outlet Shopping**, Otto-Hahn-Straße 1, ☎ 0841-886-3100, www.IngolstadtVillage.com. About 60 mostly European and American fashion brands have shops here with savings up to 70%. The mall is on the outskirts of town just off Autobahn Exit 61 (Ingolstadt Nord). An hourly bus is available from downtown.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

The **tourist office** conducts guided Old Town walks on Saturday at 2 pm from mid-April to October. A huge number of thematic walks are arranged throughout the year, mostly on weekends.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Bicycle rentals are available from **Fahrradtechnik Willner**, Friedrichshofener Straße 1e, ☎ 0841-935-350.

Where to Stay & Eat

Ingolstadt's 50 hotels cater mostly to the business traveler. Most are very modern, with the emphasis on comfort rather than romance or old-world atmosphere. Prices tend to be high but often plummet on weekends.

Near the Nordbahnhof, just over a km/almost a mile from the Old Town, is the ultra-modern **Kult Hotel**. The building is a cube and the interior is mostly straight lines too. The rooms are very modern with stainless steel and leather furniture. However, the black walls of some rooms and huge ceiling pictures may not be to everyone's taste. The **Shinshu** (€€) serves excellent Japanese cuisine in a minimalist setting. Theodor-Heuss-Straße 25, 85055 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-95-100, fax 0841-951-0100, www.kult-hotel.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Kult Hotel

Halfway between the Old Town and the Hauptbahnhof, but farther from the Danube than the name suggests, is the **Donauhotel**. It is a modern hotel with functionally furnished rooms using mostly light wood. The bright **Wilder Wein** (€€) serves light, international dishes. Münchner Straße 10, 85051 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-965-150, fax 0841-68-744, www.donauhotel.de. (€€)

Restaurant in Hotel Rappensberger

In the heart of the Old Town is the **Hotel Rappensberger**, with a more historic-look exterior. Once again, the interior is modern. The large, traditional rooms have wooden floors, while the business rooms have a more high-tech look. In contrast, the standard rooms are not particularly appealing, making the €10 per night surcharge for the higher category rooms a worthwhile investment. The stylish **restaurant** (€€) serves mostly Bavarian dishes, but international cuisine is also available. The **Bistro** (€-€€)

serves smaller meals. Harderstraße 3, 85049 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-3140, fax 0841-314-200, www.rappensberger.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Altstadthotel** is conveniently located in the heart of the Old Town but once again thoroughly modern inside and out. Rooms are fairly small but nicely furnished. Gymnasiumstraße 9, 85049 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-889690, fax 0841-886-9200, www.altstadthotel-ing.de. (€€-€€€)

Slightly less modern, but still by no means historic, is the **Bayerischer Hof** in the south of the Old Town near the Danube. Rooms are bright and functionally furnished. Münzbergstraße 12, 85049 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-934-060, fax 0841-9340-6100, www.bayerischer-hof-ingolstadt.de. (€€)

Dollstraße in the Old Town has a high concentration of restaurants. A good choice here is the **Weißbräuhaus zum Herrnbräu**, Dollstraße 3, ☎ 0841-32-890. It is the main restaurant of one of the best-known breweries in Ingolstadt. The food is unashamedly Bavarian and the beer naturally brewed according to the *Reinheitsgebot*. The beer garden is particularly pleasant. (€-€€)

For international fare head to the **Restaurant im Stadttheater**, Schlosslände 1, ☎ 0841-935-150. The restaurant has some fine views of the Old Town. (€€)

Youth Hostel

The **DJH Ingolstadt** is inside one of the neo-Classical former fortifications just outside the Kreuztor. It is closed from mid-December to end January. Friedhofstraße 4 1/2, 85049 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-305-1280, fax 0841-305-1289.

Camping

The **Azur Campingplatz** is on the banks of the Auwaldsee Lake, 4½ km/three miles from town. Facilities at this 600-lot camp are rather basic. Public transportation is limited. The site is open year-round. 85053 Ingolstadt, ☎ 0841-961-1616, fax 0841-961-1617.

Kelheim

Kelheim has a strategic location at the confluence of the Altmühl and Danube. The Danube is navigable from here downstream.

The second-largest Celtic fort in Bavaria was erected on the Michelberg and archeological finds hint at human settlements as far back as 2000 BC. The Romans and Bajuwaren also had forts here. The first written reference to Kelheim is from 866. During the 12th and early 13th centuries, the town was a favored residence of the Wittelsbach dukes. This ended after the unsolved murder in town of

Duke Ludwig in 1231. Like so many other towns in the region, Kelheim never recovered after the Thirty Years' War. During the 18th century, it was twice besieged by Austrian troops. During the 19th century, it was not added to the railway line and thus saw little industrialization. Since the completion of the Main-Danube Canal in 1992, the local economy has improved, with tourism playing an increasingly important role.

Kelheim, seen from the Befreiungshalle *(Patrick Huebgen)*

Tourist Office

Touristik-Information, Ludwigsplatz 16, 93309 Kelheim, ☎ 09441-701-234, www.kelheim.de.

Getting Around

Kelheim is not on the railway network. The closest station is Saal an der Donau, six km/four miles downstream. Buses are available and timed according to train arrivals.

Sightseeing

Kelheim is not the most interesting town in the region. It is mostly visited as a starting point for excursions to the very interesting Danube gorge and Weltenburg monastery or on the Main-Danube-Canal. If time is limited, give preference to Weltenburg. Kelheim itself is pretty and worth a stroll while waiting for the boat.

Kelheim

The main sight in Kelheim is the **Befreiungshalle** (Hall of Liberation) on Michelberg, Befreiungshallestraße 3, ☎ 09441-682-070, that towers over the town, as well as the Danube and Altmühl valleys. The grandiose monument in the form of a giant rotunda was commissioned by King Ludwig I to commemorate the allied victories over Napoleon. Leo van Klenze, inspired by the Pantheon in Rome, designed the final building, with only the single lantern providing light. Although Ludwig lost his throne in 1848, he continued the construction in his private capacity and opened it in 1863. The round temple of marble and granite is 45 m/148 ft high. Inside, 18 statues top the balustrades while 34 statues of *Victory* by Ludwig Schwanthaler bear shields with the names of 17 major battles. The monument has a bit of a dishonest feel to it: Bavaria was at first an ally of Napoleon, who elevated the duchy to a kingdom and, although the Bavarians switched sides, it is due to Napoleon that the kingdom doubled in size. Opening hours are daily, mid-March to October from 9 am to 6 pm and November to mid-March from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €3. It is possible to drive up to the monument. If hiking from the Old Town, follow Klosterstraße behind the Franziskanerkirche.

The Befreiungshalle *(Michael Chlistalla)*

Weltenburg & Danube Gorge

Upstream from Kelheim is some of the most dramatic scenery along the long flow of the Danube River. The **Donaudurchbruch** (literally Danube breakthrough) is a five-km/three-mile section of the river where it carved its way through the limestone of the Fränkische Alb mountain range. The cliff sides are at times straight walls almost 100 m/330 ft high, gleaming white or golden depending on the time of day. Until this gorge was carved through thousands of years ago, the Danube flowed north through much of the Altmühl Valley, which helps explain why that valley at times seems uncomfortably large for the Altmühl River itself. The only way to enjoy the gorges is by boat – see *Adventures*.

The destination of boat excursions is **Kloster Weltenburg**, Assamstraße 32, ☎ 09441-5911, www.areion.org/weltenburg, the oldest monastery in Bavaria. The monastery was founded in 617 as a missionary outpost from where Bavaria was Christianized. The last Agilolfinger, Duke Tassilo III, elevated it to a Benedictine monastery in 776. Its location on the beach in a bend of the river just before the Danube gorge meant that it has been flooded many times, but worse damage was caused when it was raided during the Schmalkaldian and Thirty Years' Wars. In 1713, an inexperienced, 29-year-old Cosmas Damian Asman was entrusted with designing a new Klosterkirche (Monastery Church), while his 23-year-old brother Egid Quirin was to do the stuccowork and sculptures. It was the first joint project of the

Kloster Weltenburg on the Danube

Asam brothers that would in the following 20 years elevate Bavarian Rococo to a major European art style. The church interior is a Rococo masterpiece, leaving no space unadorned. The highlight is the altar with a statue of St George slaying the dragon. A small museum in the still-functioning monastery is open daily from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €1.50, free to the church.

Weltenburg is also famous as the oldest monastic brewery in the world. It was founded in 1050 but currently uses up-to-date technology to produce several famous beers. The brews can be tasted in the **Klosterschenke**, ☎ 09441-67-570, www.klosterschenke-weltenburg.de, which serves a wide variety of mostly Bavarian dishes. (€-€€)

Although the classic and best approach is by boat from Kelheim, Weltenburg can also be reached in a few minutes by car. It is on the south bank of the Danube, eight km/five miles from Kelheim. The parking area is 700 m/766 yards from the monastery.

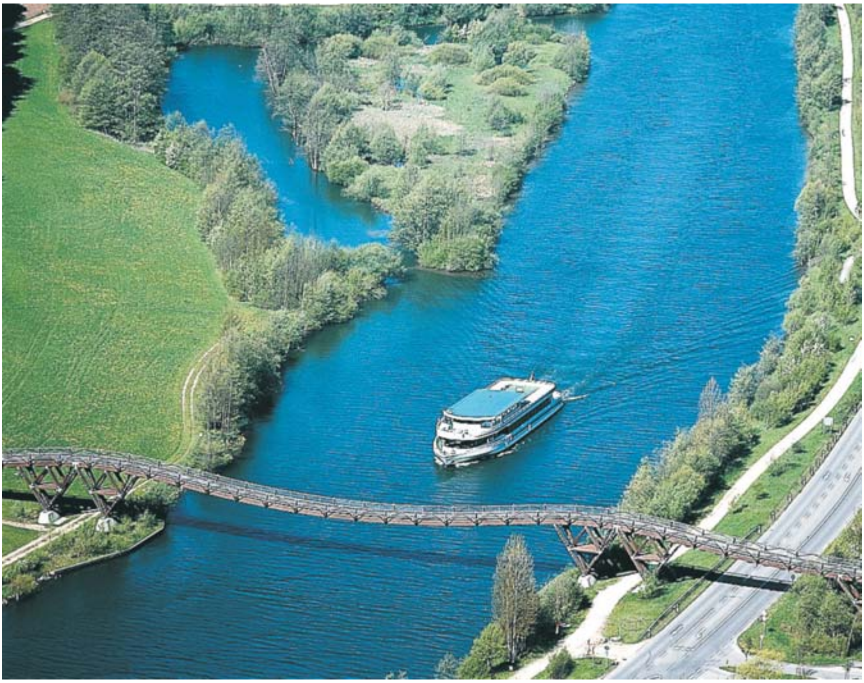
Rohr

Around 20 km/12 miles south of Weltenburg, in Rohr, is another fine example of the Asam brothers' work. The **Klosterkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt** (Monastery Church Assumption of the Virgin Mary), Asamstrasse 7, 93352 Rohr in Niederbayern, ☎ 08783-960-035, www.kloster-rohr.de, was consecrated in 1722, just two years after Egid Quirin Asam drew up the plans. The exterior is plain, following the Rococo approach that its purpose is purely to prevent the interior from falling apart. The interior is very rich, with the largest single stuccowork by Egid Quirin Asam. The focal point is the altar where seven larger-than-life statues of apostles find the sarcophagus of Mary empty, while two angels escort her to heaven. The painting of St Peter and St Paul is by Cosmas Damian Asam. The monastery, which was founded in 1133, is still functioning and presently runs a school. Rohr is just off the Regensburg-Munich Autobahn A93 Exit 49 (Abendsberg) and best reached by car.

Main Danube Canal

For centuries rulers dreamed of connecting the Danube and Rhine rivers. Charlemagne attempted it, with part of his original excavations still visible near Weißenburg (see *Altmühl Valley*). King Ludwig I had more success and actually connected the Danube and Main through the Ludwigskanal in 1846. However, his canal was too narrow and had too many locks to ever be of commercial value. This canal was severely damaged during World War II. A new one, the Main-Danube Canal, sometimes referred to as the Europe Canal, opened in 1992. From Kelheim, it follows the Altmühl River up to Beilngries and from there the canal passes by Nürnberg before entering the Main just north of Bamberg. The canal is part of a larger scheme to divert some of the ample water of the Danube to drier areas around Nürnberg. Well into its second decade, controversy still rages over the environmental damage that it caused and whether the canal will ever be a commercial success.

However, it certainly did contribute to an increase in tourism. Not only are river boats now able to offer cruises that include both the Danube and the Rhine, but shorter trips are also possible. The most popular is in the beautiful area just north of Kelheim where the canal follows the natural flow of the Altmühl Valley. Popular sights along the canal on excursions from Kelheim include Essing, Burg Prunn, and Riedenburg.



Altmühl Valley canal, with wooden bridge at Essing (Naturpark Altmühltal)

Essing has a medieval core but is most famous for the nearby **Schulerloch caves**, ☎ 09441-3277, www.schulerloch.de. These caves were used in the Neaderthal, Bronze, and Celtic eras. The main caves are just over 400 m/1,300 ft deep, with an average temperature of 9°C/48°F. Opening hours are from April to early November, 10 am to 4 pm, to 5 pm from May to early September. The compulsory 20-minute guided tours, with lights and music, start every half-hour. Admission is €3.50. Also at Essing is a 193-m/633-ft wooden bridge, Europe's longest.

Burg Prunn, near Riedenberg, ☎ 09442-3323, www.schloesser.bayern.de, dates partly from the 11th century but most of it is Late Gothic. It looks particularly romantic from the river and has inspired poets and artists for centuries. The views from the top are equally fine, but actually visiting the castle is a bit disappointing. It is smaller and of less artistic value than many other castles. The romantic location no doubt contributed to it being one of the best-known castles in Bavaria. During

Burg Prunn

the 16th century, an important copy of the Nibelungenlied was found here. (See also *Passau.*) This *Prunner Codex* is now in the Staatsbibliothek in Munich. Opening hours are daily from April to October, 9 am to 6 pm, and Tuesday to Sunday, November to March, from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €4, including the compulsory guided tour.

Riedenburg is known as the three-castle town but Tachenstein and Rabenstein are both in ruins. Fortunately, **Falkenhof Schloss Rosenburg** (Falconry Castle Rosenburg), 93339 Riedenburg, ☎ 09442-2752, www.falkenhof-rosenburg.de, on its own makes the town worth visiting too. This castle dates partly from the 13th century but most of it is Late Gothic. The castle and small museum are worth seeing but the main draw is the falconry, which includes various birds of prey such as eagles, falcons, and owls. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, 9 am to 5 pm, from mid-March to end October, with flight demonstrations at 11 am and 3 pm. Admission is €6.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Bicycles can be rented from **Thomas Jessen**, Schäfflerstraße 12, ☎ 09441-504-850.

Adventures on Water

Riverboats

Personenschiffahrt Schweiger, Rennweg 32, Kelheim, ☎ 09441-176-980, www.renate.de, operates excursions from Kelheim. Note that the trips on the Danube and Altmühl depart from different docks, 10 minutes walk apart, on the respective rivers.

The most popular excursions are from Kelheim via the Donaudurchbruch gorge to Kloster Weltenburg. The boat trip upstream takes 40 minutes, while the return is done in around 20. Boats depart daily from the Danube docks in Kelheim from mid-March to October.

Excursions on the Altmühl or Main-Danube Canal depart from Kelheim daily, except Friday and Sunday, from mid-April to mid-October. The most popular section is Kelheim to Riedenburg (two hours), although the boat continues to Dietfurt (three hours). Return is often by bus.

Where to Stay & Eat

Hotels in Kelheim are fairly basic. For more luxurious accommodation, press on to Regensburg or Ingolstadt.

Gasthof – Stockhammer

Gasthof Stockhammer

The **Gasthof Stockhammer** is a pleasant hotel on the left bank of the Altmühl close to the new pedestrian bridge to the Old Town. Rooms are spacious. All have private bathrooms but not all have a TV. The vaulted **Ratskeller** (€€) is the best restaurant in town and serves mostly regional cuisine. Am Oberen Zweck 2, 93309 Kelheim, ☎ 09441-70-040, fax 09441-700-431, www.gasthof-stockhammer.de. (€€)

In the heart of the Old Town is **Gasthof Weisses Lamm**. It has modern, functionally furnished rooms. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves Bavarian food, including Altmühltal lamb. Ludwigstraße 12, 93309 Kelheim, ☎ 09441-20-090, fax 09441-21-442, www.weisses-lamm-kehlheim.de. (€-€€)

Regensburg

Regensburg: Danube Bridge & Cathedral towers

Regensburg, at the northernmost point of the Danube and with 140,000 inhabitants, is the fourth-largest city in Bavaria. Because World War II left little damage, it has one of the most beautiful medieval city centers in Germany. Regensburg is very popular with European travelers but somehow English speakers tend to pass it by.

A Celtic colony, Radasbona was first established here about five centuries before the Romans replaced it with their own military camp around AD 80. In AD 179, the camp was enlarged and called Castra Regina. Two centuries later, Bavarian tribes forced out the Romans.

Regensburg was the ducal seat of the Bavarian rulers from the sixth up to the 13th century.

In the High Middle Ages, Regensburg, with 10,000 inhabitants, was the largest and richest city in the region. In 1245, it became a Free Imperial City. In contrast to many other similar cities, Regensburg was truly free and not subject to taxation and services to the emperor. The bishop of Regensburg kept his seat in town but the city was ruled by a mayor and citizen's council. The citizens of many other Episcopal cities, including Passau, Würzburg, and Bamberg, tried often with violence but unsuccessfully to achieve similar status. In contrast to the bishop, the Wittelsbach dukes of Bavaria could not tolerate this situation and within a decade moved their capital to Landshut.

Its decline was gradual. By the 16th century, trade routes had gradually shifted and talent moved to the new upcoming cities of Augsburg and Nürnberg. As a result, much of the core of Regensburg that survived is older than that of those two cities. The changing fortunes saw the traders losing business and most of the city indebted to the Jewish bankers. In 1519, the city expelled the Jews and wiped the slate clean. However, the prosperity of previous centuries would never return.

From 1663 to 1806, Regensburg had the prestige of housing the Immerwährender Reichstag – the first Permanent Diet or Parliament in Germany. But the Napoleonic wars ended the Holy Roman Empire and in 1810 Regensburg lost its independence, to become a provincial backwater in an enlarged Kingdom of Bavaria.

Regensburg's economic revival would not come until after World War II. New industries were founded in the region, including a BMW plant where virtually all 3-series models are produced – wait long enough at the main station and a long train loaded with newly produced cars will pass by sooner or later.

Information Sources

Tourist Information, Altes Rathaus, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-507-4410, www.regensburg.de.

Getting Around

Regensburg has a well-developed bus system. However, tourists generally need only the Altstadtbus (Old Town Bus). It runs from the main station via the most important sights in the Old Town. It departs every six minutes or so and costs €0.60.

Sightseeing

All the sights in Regensburg are in the Old Town, on the south bank of the River Danube. Most of the Old Town is a pedestrian zone. The area is 15 minutes walk from the main station along roads lined with shops. The Altstadtbus is a convenient alternative.

Dom Area

Regensburg: Dom St Peter

Construction of the **Dom St Peter** (Cathedral), Domplatz 5, ☎ 0941-586-5500, www.bistum-regensburg.de, started around 1260, shortly after Regensburg became a Free Imperial City. It was a prestige project to show off the wealth of the city and it is still the most important Gothic structure in Bavaria. The new cathedral replaced its Romanesque predecessor, of which the Eselturm (Donkey Tower) above the north transept is the only remaining part. The city overestimated the size of its purse as well as the skill of the architect. His planned 160-m/524-ft single tower could never have been constructed. In addition to the laws of physics, a shortage of funds meant that the building was not completed until 1525, sans tower. The current spires, making the west towers 105 m/344 ft high, were only added in the 19th century and it was a shoddy job – they had to be replaced a century later. The western façade is richly decorated.

Inside, the church has three naves and a non-projecting transept. It is 82 m/269 ft long and 32 m/105 ft wide. Most of the stained glass windows, as well as the sculptures of Mary and the Archangel Gabriel on the west transept pillars, are from the 13th century. Note the plaque on the south wall for Pastor Johann Maier. He was hanged on April 24, 1945 for demanding that the city should surrender to the advancing American army rather than waste life and property on a lost battle. Opening hours are daily from 6:30 am to 6 pm, closing at 5 pm from November to March. The cloisters, the Romanesque Allerheiligenkapelle, and the Carolingian Stephanskapelle can only be seen on the guided tour of the cathedral.

The **Domschatzmuseum** (Cathedral Treasury), ☎ 0941-57-645, shows the wealth of the cathedral in goldsmith work and vestments from the 11th to the 19th centuries. Plans of the single tower for the cathedral can be seen at the entrance to the museum. Opening hours are April to October from Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm; only from noon on Sunday. From November to March, it is open only on Friday and Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm, and Sunday from noon to 4 pm. Admission is €1.50.

The **Diözesanmuseum St Ulrich** (Diocesan Museum), Domplatz 2, ☎ 0941-51-688, has a rich collection of sculpture, paintings, and goldsmith work from the 11th century to the present. The museum is housed in the Early Gothic former church of St Ulrich. Opening hours are April to October from Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €1.50.

The **Alte Kapelle** (Old Chapel), Alter Kornmarkt, was originally a Carolingian Pfalzkapelle, but after two centuries of neglect it was rebuilt as a Romanesque structure in 1002. However, in the 18th century it was transformed into a Rococo masterpiece. Its rich gilded interior decorations can be seen through the gates at the rear of the church during the same hours as the cathedral.

The **Historisches Museum** (City History Museum), Dachauplatz 2, ☎ 0941-507-2448, is in a former Minorite monastery. It has displays on local history from the Stone Age to the present. Highlights include the Act of Foundation – an eight-m/26-ft-long stone with an inscription referring to the foundation of the Roman garrison here in AD 179. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €2.20.

The **Porta Praetoria**, Unter den Schwibbögen, is part of a gate that remained from the Roman garrison, Castra Regina, established here in the second century. It is part of a more modern building and was covered by plaster for centuries, but is now again uncovered. Apart from the huge monuments in Trier, this is the largest surviving Roman structure in Germany.

Porta Praetoria *(Peter Bubenik)*

Danube Banks

With 16 arches, the 310-m/1,016-ft-long **Steinerne Brücke** (Stone Bridge) was built between 1135 and 1146. Its construction greatly facilitated trading with northern areas and, for eight centuries, it was the only permanent crossing point of the Danube in the region. Fine views of the Old Town can be enjoyed from halfway across.

The 14th-century **Brückturm-Museum** (Bridge Tower Museum), Weiße-Lamm-Gasse 1, ☎ 0941-567-6015, has some displays of objects and photos on the history of the Stone Bridge and shipping on the Danube. However, the main reason to visit is to enjoy the view of the Old Town from the top of the tower. Opening hours are April to October from Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

The adjacent 1620 **Salzstadel**, with its enormous five-floor roof, was used as a salt warehouse. It currently houses a restaurant. The small, old building next to it on the banks of the Danube is the **Historische Wurstkuchl** (Historic Sausage Kitchen). It dates from the 12th century and claims to be the oldest sausage restaurant in Germany.

A few blocks upstream is the **Kepler-Gedächtnishaus** (Kepler Memorial Center), Keplerstraße 5, ☎ 0941-507-3442. The mathematician and astronomer Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) lived and died in this house. It is now a museum with period furniture, instruments used by him, and some functioning models. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm. From November to March, it is closed on Sunday afternoons. Admission is €2.20.

Rathaus Area

Altes Rathaus (Chkammerl)

The **Altes Rathaus** (Old Town Hall) was built as a prestige project to celebrate Regensburg's status as a Free Imperial City. The oldest parts date from the mid-13th century, while the large Gothic additions are a century younger. The building currently houses the information office as well as the **Reichstagmuseum** (Imperial Diet Museum), which can only be seen on a guided tour. From 1663 until the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation in 1806, a permanent Imperial Diet sat in Regensburg. The tour includes four sections. The **Beratungszimmer**, a discussion room for the prince electors, is in the oldest part of the building. Most impressive though is the **Reichsaal** (Imperial Hall), where the actual diet congregated according to a strict protocol, which kept the different estates apart. (Commoners were not represented.) The **Fragstatt**, literally questioning place, is in the cellars and includes the original torture equipment and dark cells that were used in the disbursement of justice and injustice. The tour ends with some cannons and a huge official city scale that, astonishingly, can distinguish weight differences of 5 grams or .17 ounce. It is open daily, with German tours at various times from around 10 am to 4 pm. Tours in English are available from May to September, Monday to Saturday, at 3:30 pm. Admission is €3 and tickets are sold only inside the tourism office.

Nearby **Haidplatz** is a particularly picturesque square surrounded by historic buildings. The Neue Waage held the official scales. The 13th-century **Zum Goldenen Kreuz**, at Number 7, was a guesthouse and for centuries the choice of visiting emperors and kings. The **Justiabrunnen** (Fountain of Justice) is mid-17th century. **Hinter der Grieb** is a narrow alley with medieval houses leading from the square.

Thurn und Taxis

From the mid-15th century up to the 19th century, the Thurn und Taxis family held a postal monopoly in much of Europe. The horn used by many European countries as symbol of the postal service originates from the family emblem. From 1748, the head of the family was also the emperor's principal representative (*Prinzipalkommissäre*) at the Permanent Diet. The former Benedictine monastery of St Emmeram was converted into one of Europe's most modern and lavish palaces for their use. It is still the principal seat of the family. Inheritance taxes eventually forced the family to open parts of the palace to the public.

St Emmeramkirche (St Emmerammus' Church), Emmeramsplatz 3, ☎ 0941-510-30, is a basilica dating back to the late seventh century, when the region was converted to Christianity. Most of the exterior is Romanesque and Gothic. The statues at the main entrance of Jesus Christ, St Emmerammus, and St Dionysius are 11th-century and among the oldest in Germany. The interior is a bit of a surprise – the Asam brothers altered the original Romanesque into Baroque with frescos and stuccowork. Despite their efforts, the highest art here is still the tombstone of Queen Hemma, dating to about 1280. The crypt dates from 740 AD. The church is open daily, 10 am to 4:30 pm but opens at 1 pm on Friday and at noon on Sunday. Admission is free.

Fürsterliches Schloss Thurn und Taxis (Thurn and Taxis Palace), Emmeramsplatz 5, ☎ 0941-5048-133, www.thurnundtaxis.de, is still the principal residence of the noble family. Three sections are open to visitors but only on compulsory guided tours. The tour of the **Schlossmuseum** (Palace Museum) includes the state apartments, the ball and throne rooms, and other rooms converted by the family in the 19th century into the Historicist style. The **Kreuzgang** (Cloister) of the former monastery can be seen as part of the palace tour, or separately. The clois-

Cloister of St Emmeram *(btr)*

ters are a Romanesque-Gothic combination erected between the 11th and 14th centuries. From April to October, tours of the Palace Museum and Cloisters are available daily at 11 am and 2, 3, and 4 pm (on weekends also at 10 am). From November to March, tours are on weekends only at 10 and 11 am as well as 2 and 3 pm.

The **Marstall Museum** houses more than 70 coaches that were used by the Thurn und Taxis postal service. It is open from April to October on weekdays, 11 am to 5 pm, and weekends, 10 am to 5 pm. From November to March, it can only be seen on guided tours on weekends at 11:30 am and 2 pm. Admission is €4.50 – in winter that includes the compulsory guided tour and in summer, it includes admission to the Thurn und Taxis Museum.

The **Thurn und Taxis Museum**, Emmeramsplatz 5, ☎ 0941-504-8133, houses artwork from the family and the Bavarian National Museum. Highlights include goldsmith work, clocks, porcelain, glass, and furniture, mainly from the 17th to 19th centuries. Opening hours are April to October on weekdays, 11 am to 5 pm, and weekends, 10 am to 5 pm, and from November to March only on weekends, 10 am to 6 pm. Admission in summer is €4.50 and includes admission to the Marstall Museum. In winter, admission is €3.50 for this museum only.

Walhalla

A popular excursion from Regensburg is downstream to **Walhalla**, Donaustauf bei Regensburg, ☎ 09403-961-680. According to Nordic mythology, the Valkyries carried the souls of fallen heroes to Walhalla to meet the god Odin. In the 19th century, King Ludwig I of Bavaria constructed a huge marble monument inspired by the Parthenon in Athens to house the **German Hall of Fame**. Here 121 busts and 64 plaques commemorate the great and good from German history – mostly statesmen, scientists, and artists. A committee evaluates every six years who should be added or removed.

View from Walhalla

The monument is easiest to reach by car – follow the road on the northern bank of the Danube for eight km/4.8 miles towards Donaustauf and park at the top of the hill behind the monument. Bus 5 makes the 30-minute trip several times per hour. A more interesting way is by boat – see *Adventures* below for details. Arriving by river requires climbing 358 marble steps to get to the top. Opening hours are daily from April to September, 9 am to 5:45 pm, in October, 9 am to 4:45 pm, and from November to March, 10 to 11:45 am and 1 to 3:45 pm. Admission is €2.50.

Cultural Events

Regensburg has a very busy cultural calendar. Details of programs are available from the tourist office, which can also make reservations for several events.

Apart from the symphony orchestra and several theaters, many churches schedule concerts. The **Regensburger Kultursommer** (Culture Summer) puts on a month of events, both indoors and outdoors, mostly in August. In July, the **Thurn und Taxis Festspiele** (Festival), www.thurnundtaxis.de, uses the famous castle as backdrop for open-air presentations that range from children's plays to Shakespeare and opera to contemporary music. The facilities of the palace are used for various concerts throughout the year.

From June to September, on Wednesday at noon, free 20-minute organ concerts are held in the Dom. When not on tour, the *Domspatzen* (Cathedral Sparrows) boys' choir sings at the 9 am service on Sunday.

Shopping

Regensburg has a wealth of antique shops. Most are in the narrow alleys in the Old Town near the Altes Rathaus. From April to December, but not in August, the **Kunsthandwerkermarkt** (Artisans' Market) is held the first weekend of the month on Haidplatz.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

The tourist office arranges frequent two-hour town walks for individuals. Tours in English are available from May to September on Wednesday and Saturday at 1:30 pm.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Bicycles can be rented from **Bikehaus**, Bahnhofstraße 17, ☎ 0941-599-8193, www.bikeprojekt.de.

Adventures in the Air

Hot-Air Ballooning

Balloon flights are offered by **Airsport**, Ockerweg 3, Hinterzhof, 93164 Laaber, ☎ 09498-902-460, www.airpsport.de.

Flugzentrum Bayerwald, Schwarzer Helm 71, 93086 Wörth an der Donau, ☎ 09482-959-525, www.flugzentrum-bayerwald.de, offers balloon flights and tandem paragliding jumps.

Adventures on Water

Canoeing & Kayaking

Regensburg is a popular canoeing destination. The confluence of the Naab (see *Oberpfalz*) and the Danube is upstream from Regensburg, while the Regen (see *Bayerischer Wald*) flows into the Danube just downstream of the old town. Both these streams are preferred by canoeists to the Danube, which has commercial traffic. A popular day-trip is on the Regen River from Ramspau to its confluence with the Danube in Regensburg.

Kayak rentals are available from **Penk an der Naab**, ☎ 09401-567-777, www.trekking-kanu-laden.de; **Kanuverleih Platzeck**, Embacher Straße 10, Niedertraubling, ☎ 09401-51-295, www.kanu-outdoor.de; or **Regental Kanu**, Am Burghof 16, Nittenau, ☎ 094326-2740, www.bootswandern.de.

Riverboats

Regensburger Personenschifffahrt Klinger, Werftstraße 6, ☎ 0941-55-359, has 50-minute cruises each hour, 10 am to 4 pm, from the end of March to early October. Very popular are the Regensburg-to-Walhalla cruises that depart daily at 10:30 am and 2 pm. Cruising time is 45 minutes in each direction. stopping just over an hour at Walhalla.

Where to Stay & Eat

A top choice is the modern **Sorat Insel-Hotel**, on one of the islands in the River Danube. Rooms are stylish and offer lovely views of the Old Town. The **Brandner Restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves international and regional dishes in a modern, stylish restaurant with views of the Dom. Müllerstraße 7, 93059 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-81-040, fax 0941-810-444, www.sorat-hotels.com. (€€€-€€€€)

Sorat Insel-Hotel

The **Park Hotel Maximilian** is halfway between the station and the Old Town in a 19th-century palace with an exquisite neo-Rococo façade. Rooms are elegant and some are very spacious. The rustic **Locanda Botticelli** (€€-€€€) serves Italian food and the cellar restaurant, **High Fish** (€€-€€€), offers Mediterranean cuisine. Maximiliansraße 28, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-56-850, fax 0941-52-942, www.maximilian-hotel.de. (€€-€€€€)

Bischofshof am Dom

A very romantic choice is **Bischofshof am Dom**, in a former bishop's palace adjacent to the cathedral. Rooms are furnished in country-house style. Part of the building includes the Porta Praetoria. The rustic **restaurant** (€-€€), with a beer garden in the romantic courtyard, serves hearty local specialties. Kräutermarkt 3, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-58-460, fax 0941-584-6146, www.hotel-bischofshof.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Altstadthotel Arch Ringhotel** is located on Haidsplatz in a huge patrician house dating partly from the 12th century. Rooms are furnished in keeping with the old tradition of the hotel. The rooms with exposed roof beams are the most pleasant. Haidplatz 4, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-58-660, fax 0941-586-6168, www.regensburg-ringhotels.de/arch. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Kaiserhof am Dom is directly across from the cathedral's twin towers. Rooms are pleasantly furnished and modern. Many rooms have views of the Dom.The breakfast room is in a former 14th-century chapel with vaulted ceilings. Kramgasse 10-12, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-585-350, fax 0941-585-3595, www.kaiserhof-am-dom.de. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Münchner Hof

The nearby **Hotel Münchner Hof** is in a medieval building with many historic architectural style elements, ranging from exposed beams to Gothic arches and Renaissance detailing. The rooms are comfortable with modern furniture. The rustic **restaurant** (€€) with wood paneling serves mostly local cuisine. Tändlergasse 9, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-58-440, fax 0941-561-709, www.muenchner-hof.de. (€€)

The Ibis group has two modern, functionally furnished hotels near the station. The **Ibis Castra Regina**, Bahnhofstraße 22, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-56-930, fax 0941-569-3505, is north of the railway lines. South of the railway lines, across the road from the large shopping complex, is the similar **Ibis Furtmayr**, Furtmayerstraße 1, 93047 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-78-040, fax 0941-780-4509, www.ibishotel.com. (€-€€)

The modest ground-floor entrance of the **Goliathhaus** is in contrast to the stylishness of the fifth-floor **Restaurant David**, Watmarkt 5, ☎ 0941-561-858, that serves international nouvelle cuisine. The terrace is particularly pleasing, with views of the Altstadt and the Dom. Open for dinner only. (€€€)

The stylish **Leeres Beutel**, Bertoldstraße 9, ☎ 0941-58-997, serves international cuisine inside a large warehouse-style building that is also used for film screenings and concerts. The lunch menus are generally excellent value for the money. (€-€€)

The **Ratskeller**, Rathausplatz 1, ☎ 0941-51-777, surprises with not only local fare but a wide variety of international dishes too. Both rooms have vaulted ceilings, wood-paneled walls, and an old-German feel. (€€)

On the banks of the Danube, in the afternoon shadows of the Brückturm and the Salzstadel, is the **Historische Wurstkuchl**, Thundorferstraße 3, ☎ 0941-466-210, www.wurstkuchl.de. It claims to be the oldest sausage kitchen in Germany and looks the part. Sausages with sauerkraut and beer are mostly enjoyed on the Danube terrace but there is also some seating space inside. (€)

Youth Hostels

The **DJH Regensburg** is on an island in the Danube, a 15-minute hike from the old town. It can also be reached from the station on bus 3, 8, or 9, stop Wöhrdstraße/Jugendherberge. The hostel is closed from December 23 to mid-January. Wöhrdstraße 60, 93059 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-57402, fax 0941-52-411.

Camping

Azur-camping is 1.8 miles from the town center on the south bank of the Danube. It has 200 lots. Bus 6 from the Hauptbahnhof stops in front of the camping terrain. Weinweg 40, 93049 Regensburg, ☎ 0941-270-025, fax 0941-299-432, www.azur-camping.de.

Straubing

Straubing was settled in Celtic as well as in Roman times. This helps explain why the Old Town here is called Neustadt (New Town). When a new town was founded in 1218 by Duke Ludwig the Kelheimer, it was built adjacent to where the Romans and early Bavarians had their town. As with other towns founded during the Wittelsbachs' attempt to strengthen control of trade routes through Lower Bavaria, the most distinct town-planning feature is a long, narrow square parallel to the river.

Straubing remained an important seat of government up to the 19th century but never was the history more exciting than in its early centuries. From 1353 to 1425, following one of the periodic splits of Wittelsbach lands, it served as the capital of the newly created Duchy of Straubing-Holland. Although the dukes tended to concentrate on their Dutch lands, they did erect a suitable castle.

THE TRAGEDY OF AGNES BERNAUER

The most infamous event in Straubing's history was the drowning of Agnes Bernauer. She was the daughter of a barber in Augsburg but secretly married Albrecht, heir to the Duchy of Bavaria-Munich. It was not a big secret, as the two lived together for at least a year and had a child. That was part of the problem. Duke Ernst feared that his cousins, the dukes of Bavaria-Landshut and Bavaria-Ingolstadt would find the marriage of his son with a commoner unacceptable and a reason to annex his duchy. In 1435, he had Agnes declared a witch. Her hands were tied to her feet and she was thrown into the Danube at Straubing. She managed to struggle loose and swam to the riverbank where the executioner drowned her. Although Albrecht was furious, he married his father's choice just over a year later. Anna from Braunschweig-Grubenhagen bore him seven sons and three daughters, who no doubt contributed to the family's continued uninterrupted rule until 1777.

Tourist Office

Amt für Tourismus, Rathaus, Theresienplatz 20, ☎ 09421-944-307, www.straubing.de.

Sightseeing

Old Town

At the heart of Straubing's Old Town is the elongated **Stadtplatz** (Town Square), which is divided by the 14th-century **Stadtturm** (Town Tower) into **Theresienplatz** to the west and **Ludwigsplatz** to the east. The eight-story, 66-m/217-ft Gothic tower is the symbol of the town and offers great views. On the square itself all building styles from medieval to modern can be seen, but the Baroque and Jugendstil (Art Nouveau) façades are the most impressive. The **Rathaus** has a 14th-century core but the façade is 19th-century neo-Baroque. The **Dreifältigkeitsäule** (Trinity Column) was erected in 1709 following the town's relief from a siege by imperial troops. The two fountains are 17th-century.

A block north is the most impressive of Straubing's six historic churches. The **Basilika St Jakob** (Basilica St Jacob), Pfarrplatz 1a,

☎ 09421-12-715, www.basilika-st-jakob.de, is a 15th-century, brick Gothic hall church and one of the best examples of this style in Bavaria. The tower is mostly 16th-century, with the Baroque dome added in 1780. The nave is 82 m/270 ft long but only 24 m/79 ft high. Notable artworks include some Late Gothic stained-glass windows, paintings attributed to Hans Holbein and Dürer's teacher, Michael Wolgemut. Although the interior is still mostly Gothic, the Asam brothers did a Baroque makeover in the Maria-Tod-Kapelle, while the enormous Rococo pulpit is partly by Wenzel Miroffsky, a colleague of the illustrious Cuvilliés.

The Theresienplatz

The **Gäubodenmuseum** (Regional History Museum), Fraunhoferstraße 9, ☎ 09421-974-110, in a building with a lovely Rococo façade, has items of local interest from the early Stone Age to the Rococo. The prize possession is a Roman treasure of 116 items, one of the most important Roman finds in Germany. The mostly iron and bronze objects range from household wares to impressive parade masks for both soldiers and horses. The recently discovered glass and jewelry from an early Bavarian grave are also impressive. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €2.50.

Nearby are two more churches worth seeing. The **Karmelitenkirche** (Carmelite Church), Albrechtsgasse 20, ☎ 09421-84-370, www.karmelitenorden.de/straubing, is part of the still functioning monastery. It is a triple-nave Gothic church and designed, like the nearby St Jacob's, by Hans von Burghausen. The interior received a Baroque makeover by Wolfgang Dientzenhofer. It served as the ducal pantheon, with the most impressive graves in the choir. Across the road is the **Urselinenklosterkirche** (St Ursula), Burggasse, the last but not best joint work by the talented Asam brothers.

The former **Herzogschloss** (Ducal Palace) is on the banks of the Danube. It is mostly from the mid-14th century but fell into disuse after the Duchy of Straubing-Holland was dissolved in the 1430s. The tax office moved in during the 18th century and is still the main tenant.

The building itself is not accessible for sightseeing although concerts are sometimes held in the heavily restored Rittersaal (Knights' Hall).

Farther Afield

Around 1.6 km/one mile east of Straubing, in one of the loveliest graveyards in Bavaria, is the **Kirche St Peter** (St Peter's), a true rarity in Bavaria. It is a triple-nave Romanesque basilica erected in 1180 with a Romanesque interior. Minor Baroque additions were removed in 1978 but the two 19th-century neo-Romanesque towers survived. Note the two original portals and tympana as well as the original crucifix on the main altar. Also in the graveyard is the **Agnes-Bernauer-Kapelle** (Chapel) built by Duke Ernst to atone for his sin of having her murdered. Note the erroneous date on her red marble grave. In the adjacent 15th-century **Seelenkapelle** (Souls' Chapel) is a fine Baroque *Dance-of-Death* fresco by local painter Felix Hölzl painted in 1763.

Kirche St Peter

Cultural Events

As in many other towns in the region, jazz is also popular in Straubing. The **Jazz an der Donau**, Bahnhofstrasse 9, ☎ 09421-944-307, www.jazzanderdonau.de, is held annually in July and is one of the best-known jazz festivals in Germany.

The tragedy of Agnes Benauer has inspired a play by Friedrich Hebbel and an opera by Carl Orff. The **Agnes-Bernauer-Festspielverein**, Postfach 0416, 94304 Straubing, ☎ 09421-21-999, www.agnes-bernauer-festspiele.de, arranges a festival every four years (2011, 2015) with plays on her life.

Festivals

The **Gäubodenvolksfest**, Bavaria's second-largest folk festival, is held for 10 days from the second Friday in August. It has been held since 1812 and is considered a smaller version of the much more famous Munich Oktoberfest. Although it draws close to 1.2 million visitors, it is still little known outside Germany. There is the same mixture of beer drinking, eating, music, and fairground rides as in Munich but prices are considerably lower. Some days have special discounts for families and the festival is child-friendly up to the early evening.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

The **tourism office** conducts two-hour guided town walks from mid-May to September at 2 pm on Wednesday and Saturday. Other thematic tours are available a few times each month.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Bicycles can be rented from **Bund Naturschutz**, Ludwigsplatz 14, ☎ 09421-2512, or **Radhaus Lang**, Chamer Straße 36, ☎ 09421-88-353.

Adventures in the Air

Hot-Air Ballooning

Flugzentrum Bayerwald, Schwarzer Helm 71, 93086 Wörth a.d. Donau, ☎ 09482-959-525, www.flugzentrum-bayerwald.de, arranges hot-air balloon flights in the region as well as in the Bavarian Forest.

Sightseeing Flights

On Sunday afternoons from April to October, **Fliegerclub Straubing-Wallmühle**, Flugplatzstraße 2, 94348 Atting, ☎ 09429-8469, www.airport-straubing.de, has sightseeing flights of the Straubing region. The 20-minute flights cost €25 per person. Longer flights to the Bavarian Forest or the Alps can also be arranged.

Where to Stay & Eat

Hotel Theresientor is in the heart of the Old Town. Its modern architecture is an interesting addition to the area that has buildings ranging in style from medieval to Baroque and Jugendstil. The interior of the hotel is equally modern, with rooms available in four different price and comfort classes. All are bright, with modern furniture, while the more expensive rooms have balconies. Theresienplatz 41, 94315 Straubing, ☎ 09421-8490, fax 09421-849-100, www.hotel-theresientor.de. (€€-€€€)

In stark contrast is the nearby **Hotel Seethaler**. It has a guesthouse tradition dating back to the 15th century, with 16th-century decorations and wooden beams in the public rooms. However, the bedrooms are modern and functionally furnished. Note the oxblood-stained oak beams in the **restaurant** (€€), famous for its excellent regional cuisine. Theresienplatz 25, 94315 Straubing, ☎ 09421-93-950, fax 09421-939-550, www.hotel-seethaler.de. (€€)

On the same square is the **Erstes Straubinger Weißbierhaus**, Theresianplatz 32, ☎ 09421-12-858. The food consists of local beerhouse specialties and the emphasis is, not surprisingly, on local beer. (€-€€)

Youth Hostel

The **DJH Straubing** is a 15-minute hike from the station in the town's green belt. It is closed from November to March. Friedhofstraße 12, 94315 Straubing, ☎ 09421-80-436, fax 09421-12-094.

Camping

Campingplatz Straubing has a lovely and convenient location close to the town center. There are 100 lots and it opens from early April to mid-October. Wundermühlweg 9, 94315 Straubing, ☎ 09421-89-794, fax 09421-81-281.

Deggendorf

Although Deggendorf's history goes back to at least the ninth century, it was re-founded by the Wittelsbachs in the mid-13th century. The town is considered the gateway to the Bavarian Forest and a fine base for exploring the region. Although the town itself is pretty, the nearby sights are more interesting.

Tourist Office

Tourist Information, Oberer Stadtplatz, 94469 Deggendorf, ☎ 0991-296-0535, www.deggendorf.de.

Getting Around

Rail travel to Deggenburg usually requires a changeover in nearby Plattling, from where direct trains are available to Passau, Regensburg, Landshut, and Munich. However, Deggendorf is an ideal base for seeing the Bavarian Forest by rail. The station is just under two km/one mile west of the Old Town.

Sightseeing

Old Town

Like other towns founded by the Wittelsbachs in the mid-13th century, the typical elongated **Straßenplatz** (street square) still forms the heart of the small Old Town. It is 400 by 40 m/1,310 by 131 ft and runs basically the full length of the Old Town. The façades of all buildings, ranging from Gothic to Art Nouveau, are side-by-side, to further enhance the hall-like feeling of the square. At the northern end is the 14th-century Gothic **Stadtturm** (Town Tower), with 18th-century additions. The **Rathaus** (Town Hall) was built in

1535 but is Late Gothic rather than Renaissance, as was already popular at this stage in other areas such as Franken and Augsburg.

The south end of the square is anchored by the **Heilig-Grab-Kirche** (Church of the Holy Grave). It was built on the site of the former ghetto, which was cleared following a pogrom in 1337. This 14th-century Gothic basilica is overshadowed by what is regarded as the finest Baroque church tower in Lower Bavaria. It was designed by Johann Baptist Gunetzrhainer but built by Johann Michael Fischer in 1728.

Nearby are the **Stadtmuseum** (Town Museum), Östlicher Stadtgraben 28, ☎ 0991-296-0555, and the **Handwerksmuseum** (Museum of Trades and Crafts), Maria-Ward-Platz 1, ☎ 0991-296-0555. The museums have exhibitions on the history, trades, and crafts of the region. Opening hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm and Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. The joint admission ticket is €1.50.

Slightly farther south is the **Stadtpfarrkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt** (Town Parish Church of Mary's Assumption), a triple-nave Baroque basilica. It has a fine Baroque interior, which was somewhat damaged in a late 19th-century modernizing attempt.

Farther Afield

Two spectacular Baroque monasteries are in the vicinity of Deggendorf.

■ Metten

The Benedictine monastery, **Kloster St Michael in Metten**, Abteistraße 3, ☎ 0991-91-080, www.kloster-metten.de, was founded in 766 and soon after received imperial protection from Charlemagne. It played an important role in converting the Bavarian Forest area and part of Austria to Christianity (and the German empire). The monastery was plundered during the Thirty Years' War, which opened the way for a Baroque restoration. It was secularized in 1803 but monks returned in 1830. It is still functioning as a monastery and school.

Library in the Kloster St Michael

Although part of the foundation of the **St Michaelkirche** (St Michael's) is from Carolingian times, most of the present structure is post-15th century, with the decorations early 18th-century Baroque. The main altar picture, *Lucifer destroyed by St Michael*, and the stuccowork in the choir are

St Michaelkirche

by Cosman Damian Asam. The **Bibliothekssaal** (Library) in the east wing is a Baroque masterwork by Franz Ignaz Holzinger. The surprisingly low, vaulted, and frescoed ceilings are supported by Herculean statues while stuccowork identifies the different subject sections of the library. Although the library has a huge collection, most of the historical collection was removed to other libraries following secularization in 1803. Also worth seeing is the Baroque **Festsaal** (Festival Hall). The church is open daily but the library and festival hall can only be seen on guided tours, usually at 10 am and 3 pm from Tuesday to Sunday, but usually not on religious holidays.

To the north of town is the medieval **Schloss Egg** (Castle), Egg-Bernried, ☎ 09905-289, www.schlosshotel-egg.de. Its castle tower is, at 45 m/148 ft, the highest in Bavaria. Part of the castle is from the 12th century but most is 19th-century Historicism. Visitors see the ballrooms, torture dungeons, and may climb the tower for fine views. An excellent restaurant and small hotel are on the premises – see *Where to Sleep*. Opening hours are 10 am to 4 pm on Sunday in April and October and daily from May to September. Admission is €4.

Metten is around seven km/four miles west of Deggendorf on the left bank of the Danube. It can be reached by bus, at least every two hours, in less than 10 minutes.

■ Osterhofen

One of the loveliest Late Baroque churches in Bavaria is the former Premonstratensian monastery church of **St Margaretha**, Ortsteil Altendorf, ☎ 09932-659, in Osterhofen. The present church was mostly built between 1728 and 1741 by master builder Johann Michael Fischer, while the interior is by the Asam brothers. The 18 ceiling frescoes by Cosmas Damian are considered to be among his best works. Egid Quirin's main altar is reminiscent of Bernini's papal altar in St Peter's at the Vatican.

Across the road, take a peak into the **Frauenkapelle** (Mary's Chapel), erected during the Thirty Years' War, following relief from the Swedish threat. One of the votive paintings has a very unusual scene: German families welcoming American tanks at the end of World War II.

Osterhofen can be reached in half an hour by at least hourly trains from Deggendorf; change trains in Plattling.

St Margaretha in Osterhofen

Adventures

On Water

■ Canoeing & Kayaking

Popular canoeing tours start in Plattling on the Isar, 14 km/8.7 miles upriver from Deggendorf, and can include six km/3.7 miles on the Danube, ending at Muhlhammer-Keller, or add another seven km/4.3 miles to end in Winzer. The Isar is the only significant river confluence with the Danube that is not concrete-reinforced, making for an interesting delta. Canoes can be rented from **River Tours**, Paussing 4, ☎ 0991-26-989, www.riverboot.de.

■ Riverboats

For mid-April to early October, daily cruises, except Fridays, are available from Deggendorf to Passau. The boat leaves Deggendorf at 9:45 am and Passau at 2:35 pm to return at 8:35 pm. Return by bus is possible – leaving Passau at 4:15 and arriving in Deggendorf an hour later. For details, contact **Wurm&Köck Donauschiffahrt**, Höllgasse 26, 94032 Passau, ☎ 0851-929-292, www.donauschiffahrt.de.

Where to Stay & Eat

☞ For hotel and restaurant price codes, see pages 50 and 52.

The stylish **NH Parkhotel Deggendorf** is on the banks of the Danube, adjacent to the Stadthalle and a park around 700 m/half a mile from the town center. The hotel is very modern with large, bright bedrooms. The **Tasillo** (€€) serves regional and international dishes. Edlmairstraße 4, 94469 Deggendorf, ☎ 0991-34-460, fax 0991-344-6423, www.nh-hotels.com. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Donauhof is at the edge of the town, in a 19th-century granary. Many of the modern and comfortably furnished rooms have views of the Danube. The stylish **restaurant** (€€) serves mostly regional and Mediterranean cuisine. The hotel is 500 m/a quarter-mile from the center of town. Hafenstraße 1, 94469 Deggendorf, ☎ 0991-38-990, fax 0991-389-966, www.hotel-donauhof.de. (€€)

Restaurant in the Hotel Donauhof

The **Grauer Hase**, Untere Vorstadt 12, ☎ 0991-371-270, is a gourmet restaurant south of the Old Town. It serves nouvelle cuisine with a large fish selection. (€€-€€€)

The **Ratskeller**, Oberer Stadtplatz 1, ☎ 0991-6737, is in the vaulted rooms of the Rathaus. Not surprisingly, the food is mostly Bavarian, but Mediterranean dishes are also available. (€-€€)

On the same square is **Goldener Engel**, Oberer Stadtplatz 6, ☎ 0991-4767. This traditional, 17th-century guesthouse serves regional and international food. (€€)

An interesting place to stay is **Schlosshotel Egg**, a fine hotel in a 16th-century building adjacent to the medieval castle of the same name near Metten. The romantic hotel has eight large apartments, which are nicely furnished. The **restaurant** (€€) has three cozy, rustic rooms and serves mostly local cuisine. 94505 Egg-Bernried, ☎ 09905-289, fax 09905-8262, www.schlosshotel-egg.de. (€€-€€€)

Passau

Schlosshotel Egg

Passau is a lovely town, beautifully located at the confluence of the Danube, Inn, and Ilz rivers on the border with Austria.

Celtic tribes settled in the area around 4,000 years ago but written history started after the Romans founded the military base of Castra Batava here in AD 200. In the eighth century, St Boniface founded the Bishopric of Passau and, by the late 10th century, Passau was as powerful as Salzburg. The bishops became princes of the empire in 1217 and controlled much of the Danube valley up to the 16th century. At one stage, Passau was the largest bishopric in the German-speaking world, with the marvelous Stephan's Cathedral in Vienna, originally a mere sister church of the Stephan's Dom in Passau. However, its for-

Passau: View of the Cathedral and Old Town from the Veste Oberhaus (Passau Tourismus)

tunes declined and it was the smallest German bishopric by the end of the Napoleonic era.

Passau escaped the Thirty Years' War unscathed, but a major fire destroyed most of the town in 1662. As a result, most of the old town is Baroque, although the narrow alleys confirm that much of the Baroque splendor is erected on medieval foundations. Following World War II, Passau found itself a provincial backwater cut off from its natural central European commercial base. Links with Austria continued, but relations with the Czech Republic were only restored in the 1990s.

Apart from its Baroque core, Passau is a popular departure point for bicycle tours and river cruises in the Danube Valley.

Tourist Office

Passau has two tourist offices, one at the Hauptbahnhof and a larger one at Rathausplatz 3, Neues Rathaus, 94032 Passau, ☎ 0821-955-980, www.passau.de.

Getting Around

The narrow alleys of Passau are best explored on foot. The **Hauptbahnhof** is about 10 minutes stroll through a shopping district to the edge of the Old Town and another 15 minutes to the Rathaus. The **City Bus** makes the same journey for €0.25. From the Rathausplatz, it is a steep, but rewarding, 30 minutes walk up to the Veste Oberhaus. From April to October, a shuttle bus does the journey for €1.50 one-way or €2 round-trip.

Sightseeing

Most of the sights are in the compact Old Town area on the land arm known as the **Donaustadt**, ending at the confluence of the Danube and Inn Rivers. The **Ilzstadt** is the area between the Danube and the Ilz and was the traditional bastion of the prince-bishops. The main sight in the **Innstadt**, south of the Inn River, is the Mariahilf church.

Dom Area

The **Dom Sankt Stephan** (Cathedral of St Stephan), Domplatz, is at the highest point of the Old Town. The Late Gothic east chancel and transept are the only parts that survived the 1662 town fire. The new cathedral is Baroque and has a decorated façade facing the Domplatz. The dome was only completed in the 19th century. The delicate Gothic parts can be seen from Residenzplatz.

The huge interior, one of the largest Baroque churches north of the Alps, was designed by Carlo Lurago and he left no surface uncovered. It is overloaded with gilded stuccowork and frescos. However, the true highlight is the organ – originally built in the 1920s but enlarged in the 1970s. With 17,974 pipes, 233 registers, and four carillons, it is the largest church organ in the world. The cathedral has fantastic acoustics and the organ is put through its paces frequently – see *Cultural Events* below.

The church is open daily from November to April, 6:30 am to 6 pm. From May to October, it is open from 6:30 am to 7 pm, but on weekdays when organ recitals are given it is closed from 10:45 am until 12:30 pm. Admission for the noon concerts is from 11: 20 am and a fine time to see the interior if you're planning to stay for the concert. Admission is free, but €3 at concert time.

The small **Domschatz** (Cathedral Treasure) and the **Diözesan-Museum** (Diocesan Museum), ☎ 0851-393-374, is in the 18th-century

Interior of the Cathedral (Passau Tourismus)

bishop's palace. The museum can be entered via a spiral staircase to the right of the choir in the cathedral, or from the Residenzplatz. Enter from the latter if you're planning to see only the Baroque staircase (free). The museum itself has the usual collection of Episcopal paraphernalia as well as a lovely Baroque library. Opening hours are Monday to Saturday from May to October, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €1.50.

Rathaus Area

The **Altes Rathaus** (Old Town Hall) was erected in 1399 but the tower with clock was only added in the 19th century. Bavaria's largest carillon plays inside daily at 10:30 am, 2, 7:25, and 9 pm, and also at 3:30 pm on Saturdays. High-water levels are marked on the front of the building. The **Großer Rathaussaal** (Large Town Hall), entrance on Schrottgasse, is a Baroque building with large wall and roof paintings depicting the *Nibelungenlied* and events from local history. Opening hours are daily from April to November, and December, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €1.50.

DAS NIBELUNGENLIED

The 2,400-line, epic poem *Das Nibelungenlied*, written around 1200, is one of the most important German literary works from the Middle Ages. Some three dozen written copies survived the centuries, with 11 virtually complete. The author of the poem is unknown but it is reasonable to assume that it was written for the court of the bishop of Passau. The poem is filled with action heroes, betrayal of the worst kind, and the inevitable revenge. Richard Wagner used the work in his opera, *Ring der Nibelungen*. Although Tolkien denied it, many think it may have inspired at least partly *The*

Rathaus and Cathedral *(Passau Tourismus)*

Lord of the Rings.

The **Passauer Glasmuseum** (Glass Museum) is inside the Hotel Wilder Mann, Am Rathausplatz, ☎ 0851-35-071, www.glasmuseumde. There are 30,000 items – the world's largest collection of Bohemian glass. It exhibits works of all periods of Bohemian glasswork from the 17th-century Baroque to the modern, up to 1950. The collection also includes Bavarian and Austrian works. Opening hours are daily from 1 to 5 pm. Admission is €5.

The **Museum Moderner Kunst** (Modern Art), ☎ 0851-383-8790, www.mmk-passau.de, has a collection of lesser-known contemporary artists. A real treat for devotees, but others may find the part-Gothic, part-Baroque architecture of the building more enticing. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €5.

The **Dreiflüsseckspaziergang** (Three Rivers' Corner Walk) is a lovely short walk on the banks of the Danube and Inn rivers. The far end of the promontory is the only point from where all three rivers can actually be seen at the same time. Note how long the green water of the Inn and the muddy-brown water of the Danube flow next to each other before eventually mixing, deep into Austrian territory. Boat trips, to observe this process up-close, are popular – see *Adventures* below.

Ilzstadt

The **Veste Oberhaus** was founded in 1219 as the residence of the prince-bishops. It is on the hill between the Danube and the Ilz and offers spectacular views of the Old Town and the valleys, either from the Battery Linden belvedere or from the castle tower (€1).

The complex houses the impressive **Oberhausmuseum**, ☎ 0851-493-350, www.oberhausmuseum.de. It has exhibitions on local history but, more importantly, impressive special exhibitions on Bavarian-Austrian-Czech cultural history. Opening hours are from April to October, weekdays from 9 am to 5 pm and weekends from 9 am to 6 pm. Admission is €5.

Innstadt

The main sight in the Innstadt is the **Wallfahrtskirche Kloster Mariahilf** (Pilgrim's Church of the Monastery Maria Help). The complex can be seen from the Old Town (Altstadt), and some of the best views of the Altstadt itself are from the church. The church is reached via 321 steps along the Pilgrims' Stairs, or by car. The church was erected in 1627, but achieved fame after Emperor Leopold I prayed here in 1683 requesting help to lift the Turkish siege of Vienna.

Cultural Events

Organ concerts are frequently held in the **Dom**. Most popular are the half-hour concerts held at noon on weekdays from May to October. The organist ensures that the program shows off the full range of the organ's many features. Admission is €3. On Thursdays at 7:30 during the same period, longer concerts are arranged. Admission is €5 for organ-only concerts and €8 if choral music is included.

The **Europäische Wochen** (European Weeks), www.ew-passau.de, is a large music festival held from mid-June to end of July. Towns in Austria, the Czech Republic, and Germany host events, but Passau is the center of the festival.

A small part of the world's largest pipe organ, in the Dom *(Passau Tourismus)*

Adventures

On Wheels

■ By Bicycle

Passau is a major crossing point for long-distance cycling routes. The most famous route is the **Donau Radweg** (Danube Cycling Route), traditionally done over a week, from Passau to Vienna, with extensions possible to Bratislava and Budapest.

Bicycles can be rented from **Fahrrad-Klinik**, Bräugasse 10, ☎ 0851-33-411, www.fahrradklinik-passau.de, or at the station from **Österreichischer Tourismusradverleih**, Bahnhof, ☎ 0851-490-5872, reisezentrum.passau@t-online.de, which gives 20% discount for travelers arriving by train.

In the Air

■ Hot-Air Ballooning

Bayernhimmel Ballonfahrt, Ludwigsplatz 4, ☎ 0851-34-600, www.bayernhimmel.de, offers hot-air balloon flights in the Passau region.

■ Helicopter Flights

Near Passau, **Pick Helicopter Tours**, Haberbühl 4, 94262 Kollnburg, ☎ 09942-902-840, www.pick-heli.de, has helicopter sightseeing tours.

On Water

■ Canoeing & Kayaking

Canoes and kayaks can be rented from **Bichlmoser Oberhofer**, Hochstraße 33, ☎ 0851-966-3603, www.wandern-klettern.de.

■ Riverboats

With three rivers to pick from, an above-average range of boat trips is available from Passau. **Wuem & Köck**, Höllgasse 26, ☎ 0851-929-292, www.donauschiffahrt.de, has several options. From March to October, 45-minute cruises to the three-river confluence depart every 30 minutes. In summer, cruises are available most days to and from Deggendorf. (See *Deggendorf* for details.) Longer cruises are also available, including a four-hour cruise to Linz in Austria. Long weekend cruises to Vienna, with overnight stays in hotels, are also arranged in the high season.

Where to Stay & Eat

The **Holiday Inn** is a modern hotel located close to the main station inside a shopping center. Rooms are nicely furnished and many have views of the Danube. Bahnhofstraße 24, 94032 Passau, ☎ 0851-59-000, fax 0851-590-0529, www.holiday-inn-passau.com. (€€-€€€)

The **Hotel Weisser Hase**, at the edge of the Old Town, has a tradition going back to the 16th century, but the rooms are up-to-date, with marble bathrooms. The **restaurant** (€€) serves international and regional cuisine. Ludwigstraße 23, 94032 Passau, ☎ 0851-92-110, fax 0851-921-1100, www.weisser-hase.de. (€€€)

The **Hotel Passauer Wolf** is on the banks of the Danube below the Dom. Rooms are furnished to the standards of a traditional luxury hotel. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) is in a vaulted, 16th-century cellar and has views of the Danube. International and regional dishes are available. Rindermarkt 6, 94032 Passau, ☎ 0851-931-5110, fax 0851-931-5150, www.passauerwolf.de. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Passauer Wolf

The **Hotel Wilder Mann** dates back to the 11th century and has seen its share of famous guests, from emperors to Neil Armstrong. It is in a large patrician house next to the Rathaus and hosts the famed Glass Museum as well. Rooms are opulently furnished with antiques or country house-style furniture. Some cheaper rooms are a bit cramped, though. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) on the fifth floor is in a Baroque room and open for dinner only. Rathausplatz, 94032 Passau, ☎ 0851-35-071, fax 0851-31-712, www.wilder-mann.com. (€€)

A very pleasant restaurant is the **Heilig Geist Stift Schenke**, Heiliggeistgasse 4, ☎ 0851-2607, a rustic, vaulted wine cellar dating from 1358. Both the terrace and wood-paneled interior are popular.

Dishes are regional and Austrian specialties. Especially recommended are the Austrian wines. (€-€€€)

Hostels

The **DJH Passau** is beautifully located in part of the Veste Oberhaus. The views are fantastic and the facilities equally good. It is closed for most of December. Kulturstudienplatz, Veste Oberhaus 125, 94034 Passau, ☎ 0851-493-780, fax 0851-493-7820.

The **Rotel Inn** is a very modern hostel, with an avant-garde design that looks somewhat like a passenger ship. Directly on the banks of the Danube below the Hauptbahnhoft, it is not a youth hostel and is thus open to travelers of all ages. Rooms are four m/13 ft long and exactly 1½ m/five ft wide, which is also the width of the bed that you enter from the bottom end. Furnishings are modern but basic with toilet and shower facilities on each floor. The Rotel is open from late April to early October. Hauptbahnhof/Donauufer, 94032 Passau, ☎ 0851-95-160, fax 0851-951-6100, www.rotel-inn.de. (€)

Franken & Nürnberg

Franken ([illegible] the northern, and larges[illegible] region. Franken is in many ways the most fascinating part of Bavaria. It has an interesting and varied history leaving it with some of the loveliest castles, palaces, churches, and medieval towns in Germany. It also has beautiful nature with lovely forested mountains and meandering valleys. Franken is famous for its beer, sausages, and fine wines.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- **History** 266
- **Tourist Office** 267
- **Transportation** 267
- **Nürnberg** 269

Franken is not a contemporary political concept. There has not been a state of Franken since 939 and Franken has no direct political meaning or capital. The subdivisions of Unter (Lower), Mittel (Middle), and Ober (Upper) Franken have administrative roles and regional capitals. Franken is more a concept based on history and cultural habits and even this does not draw neat borders. Parts of Unterfranken such as the Spessart and Rhön have more in common with the state of Hessen, while parts of the state of Baden-Württemberg, including much of the Tauber Valley, are clearly Franconian in character.

Most of Franken became part of Bavaria only during the Napoleonic era. For some Franconians two centuries are far too short to make them Bavarian. Although political and cultural organizations exist that aim to increase the independence of Franken from Munich, they have made little headway, and few Franconians would support actual independence from Bavaria. Although the red-and-white standard of Franken is often flown, it has no legal significance and the Bavarian white-and-blue flag is commonly seen throughout the region.

The correct English translation of Franken (say *Frahnken*) is Franconia.

We start off with **Nürnberg**, its largest city and the second-largest overall in Bavaria. This city was at the heart of German politics for 800 years and has an interesting Old Town, almost completely enclosed by its original town walls. In addition to its huge castle, there are a few major Gothic churches, and some very interesting museums. Nürnberg is also famous for the Nazi Party Rallies held here in the

1930s, as well as for the trials of senior Nazi figures following World War II.

Oberfranken is northeast of Nürnberg and includes the fascinating historic city Bamberg – a UNESCO Cultural Heritage Site – as well as Bayreuth, famous as the seat of the Wagner Festspielhaus. Coburg, Kronach, and Kulmbach in the far north are interesting towns with famous castles. The Baroque church of Vierzehnheiligen near Bad Staffelstein is considered one of the best works of Balthasar Neumann.

Unterfranken is famous for its wines, especially those produced in the Main Valley around Würzburg, the largest and most interesting town in the region. Würzburg has been the seat of a bishopric for centuries and in addition to the partly Romanesque cathedral is famous for its fortress and for the UNESCO-listed Residenz, the Baroque masterpiece of Balthasar Neumann. The Main Valley has several postcard-perfect, small, wall-enclosed towns.

Mittelfranken has numerous romantic, medieval-looking towns. None is more famous than Rothenburg ob der Tauber, a major stop on the popular Romantic Road holiday route that partly runs through the western parts of the region.

History

Franken developed as a duchy during Merovingian and Carolingian times when some of the Franks, who settled mostly in the Rhine Valley, started to move farther inland along the Main. In 911, Konrad, duke of East Franken, was elected the first German king. Although Franken was one of the five original duchies of the German kingdom, its dukes were troublesome. In the mid-10th century, King Otto I decided to leave the duchy vacant and the land was eventually divided.

From the 12th century until inclusion in Bavaria during the Napoleonic era, the main forces in Franken were religious leaders with secular powers, noble families, as well as free imperial cities. Of the religious leaders, the most powerful were the prince bishops of Würzburg and, to a lesser extent, the bishop of Bamberg. Of the secular elites, none was more important than the Hohenzollern family. Originally the burgraves of Nürnberg, the Hohenzollerns became prince electors of Brandenburg in 1415 and eventually kings of Prussia, then, from 1871 to 1918, German emperors. By that time, the family had long split but in Franken it continued to rule mostly the counties of Brandenburg-Ansbach and Brandenburg-Bayreuth. Free Imperial Cities played a prominent role in Franken, especially during the late Middle Ages. The most important was Nürnberg, which in 1618 was the second-largest city in Germany after Cologne.

The people of Franken were generally quick to accept the Lutheran Reformation. Most of the cities, as well as the Hohenzollern-governed areas, became Lutheran. However, as so much of Franken was governed by bishops, they generally succeeded in enforcing adherence to the established faith. Würzburg's Bishop Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn was particularly active in his counter-reformation efforts in the decades prior to the Thirty Years' War.

Although the major battles of the Thirty Years' War were not in Franken, the war nevertheless devastated and depopulated much of the region. It hit the free imperial cities particularly hard – Rothenburg would never recover, while Nürnberg took two centuries to reestablish itself as an important urban center. The protestant areas took longer to recover while the bishoprics of Würzburg and Bamberg experienced a cultural boom with the erection of several Baroque structures.

At the start of the 19th century, Napoleon forced secularization on the German bishoprics and monasteries. Bavaria did well and received, among others, the extremely wealthy and large bishoprics of Würzburg and Bamberg. After defeating Prussia, Napoleon gave the Hohenzollern counties of Brandenburg-Ansbach and Bayreuth to his Bavarian ally too. Skilful Bavarian diplomacy enabled Bavaria to retain these Franconian properties at the Congress of Vienna (1814-15).

From then to the present, Franken has been part of Bavaria. The small Duchy of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, which produced the present British royal family, joined Bavaria in 1920. The state's current borders were finalized after a miniscule part of Thuringia had managed to escape the Communist-fate of the rest of that state by being included in Bavaria after World War II.

Tourist Office

Franken is divided into 15 tourist regions. A good place to start searching for information is the umbrella tourism body for the whole region: **Tourismusverband Franken**, Postfach 440453, 90209 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-941-510, fax 0911-941-5110, www.frankentourismus.de.

Getting Around

By Rail

Franken has excellent railway connections between the main centers. Nürnberg is a major railway hub with connections to all parts of Bavaria and indeed Germany. From Nürnberg, at least two trains per hour are available to Munich (one hour 20 minutes to one hour 40 minutes), Würzburg (50 minutes to one hour 15 minutes), Bamberg (32 to 59 minutes), and Ansbach (25 to 45 minutes). Hourly regional trains are available to Bayreuth (just over an hour).

Rail connections to Rothenburg ob der Tauber always require a transfer at Steinach, which has direct connections to Würzburg and Ansbach. From Nürnberg, a transfer is usually required at Ansbach. From Munich, multiple transfers are necessary, with the journey taking well over three hours.

By Road

Although virtually every part of Franken can be visited on public transportation, a car is a joy when visiting smaller towns and rural areas away from the main cities. Roads are in excellent condition and well marked. Autobahns are available between the major cities with turn-offs close to most smaller towns too. However, to enjoy the natural beauty of Franken it is necessary to leave the autobahn and use the country lanes that travel through the valleys, hills, and forests that make Franken so special.

Parking is generally not a problem. Many of the walled towns are closed to non-local cars but parking lots are available at the edge of Old Towns and walking distances are short. In larger towns, and often in smaller ones too, it is generally easier to head directly for a parking lot and park for the day rather than try to work out the myriad parking rules posted in streets.

Buses provide services to smaller towns not on the rail network. The larger towns such as Nürnberg, Würzburg, Bamberg, and Bayreuth have their own bus systems with lines to nearby towns. The rest of Franken is mostly served by **Omnibusverkehr Franken**, Nelson-Mandela-Platz 18, 90459 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-430-570, www.ovf.de. Reading the OVF timetables is hard without local knowledge but, fortunately, the German Railway website automatically includes bus services in its searches at www.bahn.de.

By Air

The only airport of note in Franken is **Nürnberg Airport** (see page 37 for details). Although Nürnberg serves an increasing number of domestic and European destinations, most foreign visitors are more likely to arrive at Frankfurt or Munich airports. The fast rail and road connections mean any part of Franken is best reached that way from the first port of entry.

Nürnberg (Nuremberg)

Nürnberg with the Kaiserburg (www.bayern.by)

Nürnberg (in English usually written Nuremberg) is a city of half a million people. The second-largest city in Bavaria, it's a major industrial center. It is a popular destination with German and continental tourists, but receives far fewer English-speaking visitors than it should. Many English-speakers associate Nürnberg with the events before and directly after World War II, rather than the vast political and cultural role the town played over a period of 800 years.

The oldest reference to Nürnberg goes back to 1050 and eight centuries of glorious history followed. Two towns on either side of the River Pegnitz, Lorenz and Sebald, developed separately until they united in the 14th century to form Nürnberg. Emperor Konrad II built a palace in Lorenz and Emperor Heinrich III started the castle in Sebald.

In 1219 Nürnberg became a Freie Reichstadt (Free Imperial City) in the Holy Roman Empire. This meant that it had to answer only to the emperor himself. This status would be a thorn in the flesh of the margraves of Nürnberg, who continued to rule much of the area in the region up to the early 19th century.

The Golden Bull, forced on Emperor Karl IV in 1356, among others, stipulated that all new emperors had to hold their first Reichstag (Imperial Parliament) in Nürnberg – a tradition that continued until 1543. The imperial jewels were kept in Nürnberg from 1424 to 1796, and again briefly during the Nazi period.

Nürnberg's golden age was in the late 15th and early 16th centuries. During this period, it was at the peak of its economic and cultural development. Several artists and scientists were based here. Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), the man who brought the Renaissance to Germany, was born and spent most of his life in Nürnberg. The poet Hans Sachs (1494-1576); the sculptor Veit Stoß (1445-1533); Peter Henlein (1480-1542), the builder of the first pocket watch; and Martin Behaim

(1459-1506), the cosmographer and creator of the first globe – all worked here during the period.

Ironically, it was the maps created in Nürnberg that helped with the discovery of sea routes to the east. This altered trade patterns and spelled the end of wealth in the area for centuries. Additionally, Nürnberg backed the Reformation early on and thus upset the staunchly Catholic Emperors. They refused to hold future parliaments in the town and, worse, favored Augsburg in southern Bavaria, which increasingly took away trade and culture.

In the early 17th century, Nürnberg, with a population of 50,000, was the second-largest city in Germany. By 1806, when the city lost its free imperial status to become part of Bavaria, the town was impoverished, hopelessly indebted, and the population less than 25,000. Recovery started during the 19th century when the Nürnberg region was among the first in Germany to industrialize. In 1835, the first commercial railway link on continental Europe opened between Nürnberg and nearby Fürth.

The Nazis picked Nürnberg to host the annual party rallies that attracted up to 1.6 million participants. At the 1935 rally, anti-Semitic laws, often referred to as the Nuremberg Laws, were adopted, legalizing the segregation of Jews, which had been common practice since the Nazis came to power in 1933.

On January 2, 1945, an air raid destroyed 90% of the Old Town. Most of the buildings are therefore reconstructions, but are generally faithful to the original plans. The town walls largely escaped undamaged.

For many, Nürnberg will always be associated primarily with the Nazi rallies, the Nuremberg Laws, and the Nuremberg Trials. In contrast to Berlin and Munich, which have managed to hide their Nazi heritage somewhat, sites associated with the Nazis are large and easily accessible in Nürnberg. They are well worth seeing.

Information Sources

Tourist Office: Information is available from the Verkehrsverein, Postfach 4248, 90022 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-23-360, www.tourismus.nuernberg.de.

Information offices for walk-in inquiries are across from the Hauptbahnhof in the Künstlerhaus, Königstraße 93, ☎ 0911-233-6131, and at the Hauptmarkt, ☎ 0911-233-6135.

THE NÜRNBERG CARD + FÜRTH

The tourism office and many hotels sell the Nürnberg Card+Fürth for €18. It allows unlimited entry into most museums and free use of local transportation in Nürnberg and nearby Fürth for two days. The card is only available to visitors spending at least one night in a local hotel.

Getting Around

Nürnberg has an excellent public transportation system, combining, S-Bahn and U-Bahn trains, trams, and buses. The Hauptbahnhof, directly south of the Old Town, is the hub for all modes of transportation.

Walking is by far the best option, as many parts of the Old Town are for pedestrians only and one-way streets make for difficult navigation by car. To reach the Nazi sites, public transportation is more convenient.

Sightseeing

Virtually all tourist sights are within the five-km/three-mile medieval town wall. It is possible to cross the Old Town on foot from the Hauptbahnhof to the Kaiserburg in about half an hour – however, few would want to rush through that fast.

For the purposes of this guide, the Lorenzkirche area runs from the Hauptbahnhof to the River Pegnitz and the Hauptmarkt area from the river to the Kaisersburg. From here, return to the station through the western parts of the town – the Dürer Museum area, the western town walls, the Weisser Turm area, and the marvelous German National Museum. Use public transportation to reach the Nazi sights.

If time is limited, give preference to the German National Museum, the Kaiserburg, the town fortifications, and the Reichsparteigelände. The St Lorenz, St Sebald, and Frauenkirche are also interesting.

St Lorenzkirche Area

The modern Hauptbahnhof is just outside the town walls. From here, the main entrance into the Old Town is via the **Königstor** (King's Gate), one of four remaining fat, round towers. Around 3.8 km/2.3 miles of the original five km/three miles of town walls and 71 of the original 130 defensive towers survived. Fine parts of the wall can be seen at Frauengrabe, but the sections at the west of the town and below the Kaiserburg are even better. Behind the gate is the **Handwerkerhof**, Am Königstor,

The Handwerkerhof (www.tourismus.nuernberg.de)

☎ 01805-860-700-590, a restored medieval-looking area selling mainly arts and crafts – see *Shopping* below for details.

Not all of Nürnberg is or tries to be medieval. The city is also proud of its role in contemporary design, not only in art but also in industrial products. The **Neues Museum** (New Museum), Luitpoldstraße 5, ☎ 0911-240-200, www.nmn.de, opened in 2000 and is dedicated to contemporary fine arts, applied arts, and design. In addition to the vast permanent exhibition, large temporary exhibitions are staged. The museum shop has a large selection of ultra-modern household items on sale. Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday from 10 am to 8 pm and weekends from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €4 (€1 on Sunday).

St. Lorenzkirche *(jailbird)*

Königstraße leads up to the **St. Lorenzkirche** (St Laurent's Church), Lorenzer Platz, ☎ 0911-244-6990, www.lorenz-kirche.de. This High Gothic church was erected over a century, starting in 1260, and further enhanced in 1477 with Late Gothic elements. It was severely damaged in 1945, with only the towers left standing, but rebuilt with much of the original art. Of special note is the *Englischer Gruß* (*Annunciation*, 1517-18) by Veit Stoß, and the tabernacle (1493) by Adam Krafft, adorned with a crucifix by Stoß. The rose window in the west façade is nine m/29 ft across. Opening hours are Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 5 pm and Sunday from 1 to 4 pm.

To the west of the church is the **Nassauer Haus**, Karolinenstraße 2, the oldest private home in Nürnberg. The lower two floors are from the 13th century, while the oriel and towers are 15th century.

The **Tugendbrunnen** (Virtues Fountain) was completed in 1589 as a symbol of Nürnberg's independence as a Free Imperial

City. The figures symbolize good virtues, with justice towering over them on the third level of the fountain.

The **Museumsbrücke** (Museum Bridge) crosses the River Pegnitz to the Sebald part of town. There are actually no museums near the bridge, but it affords the best views of the **Heilig-Geist-Spital** (Holy Ghost Hospice), Spitalgasse/Hans-Sachs-Platz. It is partly 14th-century, but the most famous parts that span the River Pegnitz are 16th-century. It now houses an old age home.

Hauptmarkt Area

Frauenkirche on Hauptmarkt *(www.tourismus.nuernberg.de)*

The **Hauptmarkt** (Main Market) is the center of all markets and festivals in Nürnberg. Its beginnings were anything but celebratory. In 1349, Emperor Karl IV, who was constitutionally responsible for the protection of Jews in the city, was dependent on Nürnberg for financing and secretly made it known that he would not oppose the town's plans to rid themselves of debts owed to Jewish moneylenders. Following the example of Swiss and French towns, the Jews were blamed for the nearing plague. The local Jews were forced into their houses, the doors cemented shut, and the whole ghetto set on fire. With the Jews dead and debts cleared, the former ghetto area was used to create the new market square.

Probably to atone for this sin, Karl IV donated the **Frauenkirche** (Church of Our Lady), Hauptmarkt, ☎ 0911-206-560. This 14th-century Gothic church was the first hall church in the area. More interesting than the church or the art is the carillon. The

Männleinlaufen is a set of seven small metal men, representing the seven Prince Electors, who come out daily at noon to pay homage to the Emperor. It reflects the constitutional decree determined by the Golden Bull of 1356, which determined the seven electors, who could elect the emperor and in return swore allegiance. The symbolism is more interesting than the actual show. Opening hours are Monday to Saturday from 9 am to 6 pm and Sunday from 12:30 to 6 pm.

The **Schöner Brunnen** (Beautiful Fountain) is a century-old copy of the original late-14th-century Gothic marvel. It stands 19 m/62 ft high and has 40 colorfully painted figures from the Bible, philosophy, liberal arts, and politics. Note the Golden Ring, a seamless copper ring inside the fencing. Tourists turn it three times for good luck – locals know one turn is quite sufficient! (Parts of the original fountain are in the German National Museum.)

Schöner Brunnen

The **Altes Rathaus** (Old Town Hall) was completed in 1622, a mixture of High Renaissance and Early Baroque styles. It also incorporates parts of a building from 1340, including the large reception hall. This is the largest secular building in historic Nürnberg. It has copies of the imperial jewels in the foyer. The building was severely damaged in the war and much of the interior, including Albrecht Dürer's wall paintings, has not been restored

The **St. Sebaldkirche**, Albrecht-Dürer-Platz 1, ☎ 0911-214-2500, is the largest church in town. It was initially a Late Romanesque triple-nave church, erected in 1230-40, but altered up to the 14th century with Gothic additions. The interior is far more harmonious than the somewhat odd-looking exterior. The church was severely damaged in 1945 but restored – photos with peace messages show some of the damage. The church is filled with art. A highlight is the Gothic St Sebald's tomb – a 1519 bronze by Peter Vischer. In the chancel and ambulatory are several works by Veit Stoß. The church opens daily at 9:30 am and closes at 4 pm from January to March and November, at 6 pm in October, December, April, and May, and at 8 pm from June to September.

Nürnberg has long been important in toy production and still hosts a large annual toy trade fair. Admission to this fair is strictly limited to bona fide traders and manufacturers, but open to all is the **Spielzeugmuseum** (Toy Museum), Karlstraße 13-15, ☎ 0911-231-3164, www.museen.nuernberg.de. It has displays of historic wooden toys, dolls, mechanical toys, tin toys, and model trains. The upper floor has post-World War II toys, including Lego and Barbies. It is very much a look-but-do-not-touch museum, but a special room on the top floor has toys for children to play with while parents look at the historic ones. Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday from 10 am to 5 pm and weekends from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €5.

Adjacent to St Sebald is the triangular **Albrecht Dürer Platz**, with an 1840 bronze statue of the great artist. Behind the statue is the entrance to the **Nürnberger Felsengänge** (Nuremberg Rock-Cut Cellars), Bergstraße 19, ☎ 0911-227-066. These are huge cellars cut out of sandstone to provide cold storage for beer. The first ones were cut before 1380 and were used up to 1900. Four levels of cellars were cut and, during the air raids of World War II, up to 25,000 people hid here. As with the Art Bunker, there is not much to see other than the bare walls. Note that even in summer, the temperature stays below 8°C/46°F. Guided tours meet daily at the Albrecht-Dürer-Platz, behind the memorial, at 11 am, 1, 3, and 5 pm. Admission is €4.

The **Stadtmuseum Fembohaus** (Fembo House City Museum), Burgstraße 15, ☎ 0911-231-2595, www.museen.nuernberg.de, is ensconced in the best-preserved patrician house in town from the 16th century. Note the large sundial when walking uphill from the Hauptmarkt – Nürnberg still has 32 of the original 73 in working condition. Nürnberg's position at the heart of Germany and the wealth of the artists who lived here during the Middle Ages insure interesting displays. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 8 pm on Thursday. Admission is €5.

Kaiserburg

The **Kaiserburg** is a highlight of any visit to Nürnberg. It is in this mighty fortress that the Emperor stayed while in town. Construction of the castle started in 1167. The Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation had no permanent capital and the emperor had to move around with his entourage from palace to palace. Between 1050 and 1571, every emperor visited Nürnberg. In total around 300 imperial visits took place and several imperial parliaments met here. Karl IV visited 40 times and Ludwig the Bavarian 70 times.

It is a steep walk up from the Old Town to the Castle. The ticket office recently moved to the deepest inner courtyard next to the **Kaiserburgmuseum** (Imperial Castle and Kaiserburg Museum), Auf der Burg 13, ☎ 0911-244-6590, www.schloesser.bayern.de. This branch of the German National Museum is a good place to spend time

The Kaiserburg *(Dalibri)*

while waiting for the guided tour of the Castle. The museum focuses on military history and practices during the Middle Ages, with a fine collection of armor and weapons.

The interior of the Castle can only be seen on a guided tour – sometimes available in English. During the tour, the palace is seen, with the double chapel, the imperial reception rooms, and apartments. The tour ends with a demonstration of the **Tiefer Brunnen** (deep well) – a 53-m/173-ft-deep well cut out of solid rock. It is worth climbing the mighty, round **Sinwell Tower** for fantastic views of the Old Town.

Opening hours of the buildings are daily from April to September 9 am to 6 pm, and October to March from 10 am to 4 pm. Some parts of the Castle grounds remain open until dark. Admission to the whole complex, including a guided tour, is €6.

Dürer-Museum Area

The **Tiergärtnerplatz**, directly below the Castle, is one of the loveliest medieval squares in Nürnberg. It is framed by several half-timbered houses and the former town defenses. The lower, smaller gate is from the 13th century, but the wider gate had to be added in the 16th century in order to allow the increasingly larger carts to pass through. It is possible to walk from here to Neutor on the sentries' walk.

The **Albrecht-Dürer-Haus** (Albrecht Dürer's House), Albrecht-Dürer-Straße 39, ☎ 0911-231-2568, www.museen.nuernberg.de, is a museum dedicated to the great Early Renaissance artist who lived and worked here from 1509 to his death in 1528. The house miraculously survived the carnage of 1945. The museum is furnished mostly as it was in the time of Dürer and demonstrations of some of the printing techniques Dürer introduced are held in the upper floor studio. Some Dürer drawings are on display but, for his greatest works, visit the German National Museum. Opening hours for the Albrecht-Dürer-Haus are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 8 pm on Thursday. In July and August, as well as during the Christmas market, the museum is also open on Monday. Admission is €5 and includes an English-language audio guide.

ALBRECHT-DÜRER-HAUS

Albrecht-Dürer-Haus *(Keichwa)*

The **Historischer Kunstbunker im Burgberg** (World War II Art Bunker), Obere Schmiedgasse 52, ☎ 0911-227-066, is where much of Nürnberg's art was stored during World War II. In these medieval cellars, cut out of rock 24 m/79 ft underneath the Kaiserburg Castle, the art was safe from air raids and fires. The bunker can only be seen on the daily guided tour at 3 pm. Frankly, there is not much to see here except the bare bunker, some photographs, and the ingeniously simple air circulation system. Admission is €5.

THE IMPERIAL REGALIA & INSIGNIA

During the first five centuries of the Holy Roman Empire, the royal insignia and other treasures were kept by the ruling king. However, in 1423, Emperor Sigismund was in financial trouble and sold the right to keep the insignia in perpetuity to the city of Nürnberg. Henceforth, the royal insignia left Nürnberg only for the coronations ceremonies in Frankfurt.

In 1796, French troops were marching on Nürnberg and the treasury was temporarily moved to Regensburg. Four years later, Napoleon was threatening Regensburg too and the treasury was moved in haste to Vienna. Emperor Franz II gave his personal assurances that this was only a temporary measure. However, in 1806, fearing that Napoleon would claim the throne of the Holy Roman Empire too, Franz II unconstitutionally announced the dissolution of the empire. Ever since, Vienna has refused to return the jewels to Nürnberg.

In 1938, the Nazis returned the insignia to Nürnberg for propaganda purposes. During World War II, the insignia and other art works were hidden in the Kunstbunker. The most important items, including the crown, were actually cemented into a wall. Only four people knew the exact location. After the war, fearing the Americans would honor the European tradition of to-the-winners-go-the-spoils, they initially refused to reveal the location.

Once it became clear that the Americans would not take the crown to the States, the location was revealed. However, the American occupiers had the complete treasure returned to the Hofburg in Vienna. Copies of the insignia are on display in Nürnberg but those, of course, are not the real thing.

The most impressive parts of the town defenses are the section from the Kaiserburg Castle to **Spittlertor**. The defenses over the River Pegnitz are impressive too and can be seen from **Hallertorbrücke** outside the Old Town, or more interestingly from a hanging bridge on the inside of the walls. The area at Maxbrücke and the Henkersteg that leads to a small island in the river is especially picturesque.

Weisser Turm Area

The **Weisser Turm** (White Tower) was part of the 13th-century defenses, but is now several blocks from the later walls. The area is a popular meeting place, partly because one of the two underground stations in the Old Town is directly underneath the tower.

Next to the tower is the 1984 **Ehekarussellbrunnen** (Wedding Carousel Fountain). It illustrates scenes from Hans Sachs' poem about the bitter-sweetness of marriage. The comical caricatures are graphic enough to be understood even without reading the titles.

The **St. Elisabethkirche** (St Elizabeth's Church), Jakobsplatz,

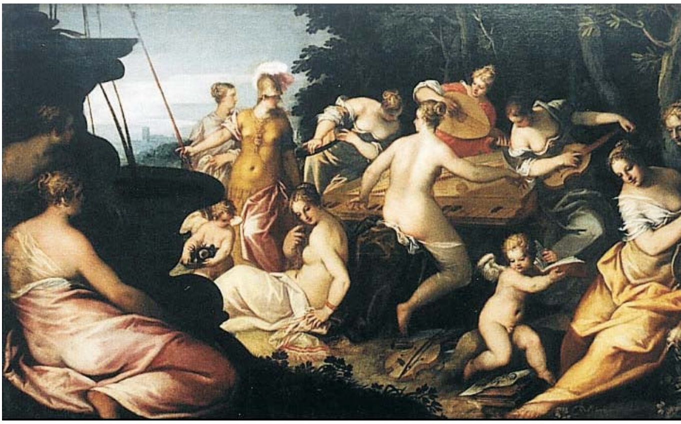
The Weisser Turm *(Andreas Praefcke)*

☎ 0911-940-1280, originally belonged to the Order of Teutonic Knights. In 1785, the existing simple church was replaced by a neo-Classical building with a 50-m/164-ft-high cupola. As Napoleon forced the order to disband in 1809, the interior was only completed in 1902. It is dominated by huge statues of the apostles. Opening hours are daily from 7 am to 7:30 pm.

The 14th-century **St. Jakobskirche** (St James' Church), Jakobsplatz, ☎ 0911-209-143, was severely damaged in 1945, but the exterior was rebuilt following the original plans. The inside is more modern although the high altar is thought to be the oldest in town. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 5 pm.

German National Museum Area

The **Germanisches Nationalmuseum** (National Museum of German Art and Culture), Kartäusergasse 1, ☎ 0911-13-310, www.gnm.de, was founded in 1852 to collect art, cultural objects, and documents related to the German-speaking world. Currently it has about 1.2 million pieces, of which some 20,000 are on display, making it the largest cultural history museum in Germany. The core of the museum complex is a medieval monastery, whose church and cloisters are used to exhibit religious artworks. The rest of the museum is more modern. The layout is somewhat confusing, but free floor plans are available.



Minerva and the Muses
by Hans Rottenhammer (1603)

The Picture Gallery has a large number of works by Dürer, Cranach, Rembrandt, and Holbein, while the sculpture section has excellent works by Veit Stoß and Tilman Riemenschneider. The applied and decorative arts sections are very impressive and include the oldest globes in the world, early clocks, pianos, other musical instruments, and even a 17th-century dollhouse. The early and pre-history sections have jewelry from the Germanic tribes and the oldest item, a 90-cm/35-inch-high golden cone dating from 1200 BC. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm, closing at 9 pm on Wednesday. Admission is €5.

Down the road, just outside the Old Town, is the **Verkehrsmuseum** (Transport Museum), Lessingstraße 6, ☎ 0911-230-880, which combines two museums. The more popular is the **Deutsche Bahn Museum** (German Railways) with Germany's largest collection of historical railway equipment, ranging from a copy of the Adler (the first steam engine that connected Nürnberg and Fürth) to the most modern ICE trains. The collection of the **Museum für Kommunikation** (Communication Museum) includes the first German phone, postal delivery vehicles, and various telecommunications equipment. The museum is suitable for all ages, with many hands-on displays to appeal to children. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 9 am to 5 pm. Admission is €4.

Nazi Sights

The sights associated with the Nazis are not within walking distance from the Old Town but can be reached easily via public transportation. The parade ground of the Nazi Rallies is southeast of the Old Town and the Court of the Nürnberg trials is to the west.

Reichsparteigelände (Nazi Party Rallying Grounds): It is best to start a visit to the Nazi Party Rallying grounds at the documentation center. That will help to explain the background and the lay of the land. Three major structures survive to the present: the Congress Hall, the Great Road, and the Zeppelin Tribune. The area is easiest to reach by Tramlines 6 and 9 (stop Dokumentations-Zentrum), or S-Bahn S2 (station Dutzenteich).

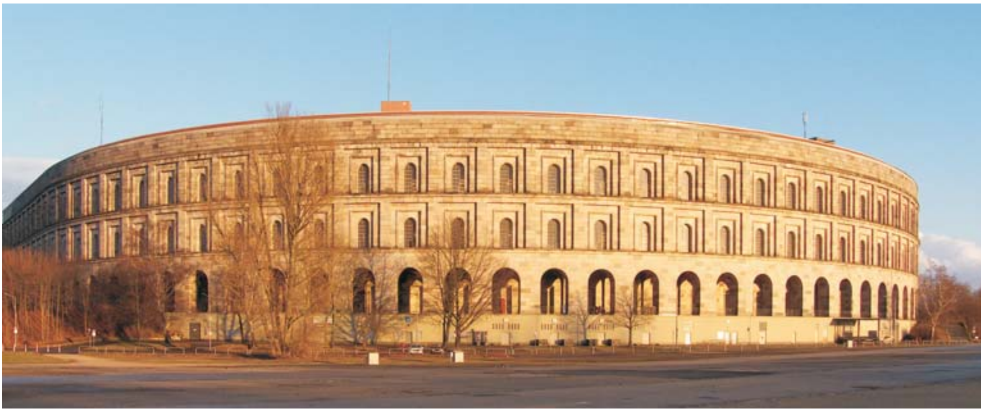
THE NAZI PARTY RALLIES

The Nazi Party held rallies in Nürnberg in 1927 and 1929, mostly due to the city's central location and easy access from all parts of Germany. The suitable location, as well as the symbolism of Nürnberg's links to the old Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation, led to the town being selected as the permanent seat for the party rallies. From 1933 to 1938, six party rallies were held here. The seventh, under the motto "Party Rally of Peace," was scheduled for September 2, 1939 but abruptly cancelled without stating the reason on August 26.

As the distinction between party and state became vaguer, the rallies increasingly served as a showpiece of German military might. Foreign diplomats were invited and often left disturbed, but impressed. The rallies involved endless speeches, parades, sporting events, and military parades.

The 1938 rally was attended by 1.6 million people over a period of a week. It was a logistical nightmare – in the Documentation Center are some priceless comments by attendees on the toilet facilities, the attempts of senior party members to enter the red light district, and the fact that bars playing music seemed to be better attended than those playing Hitler's speech.

The increasing importance of the rallies led to plans to build an entire complex specifically for the rallies. It was designed by Albert Speer and construction done largely by slave labor. Work slowed down after the outbreak of the war but never completely stopped – planning continued into 1945.



Kongreßhalle *(Tobias Bär)*

The massive **Kongreßhalle** (Congress Hall) was designed to accommodate 50,000 delegates. It was never completed but what was finished was built "to last 1,000 years." Nürnberg has been stuck with the building, since demolishing it would be expensive and the whole area is now under protection order. Most of the building is now a storage warehouse, but it also houses the interesting **Dokumentationszentrum Reichsparteitagsgelände** (Documentation Center Nazi Party Rallying Grounds), Bayernstraße 110, ☎ 0911-231-5666, www.museen.nuernberg.de. The center has an excellent permanent exhibition entitled *Fascination and Terror*, which uses photos, models, audio, and video to explain the Nazi regime, with special emphasis on the events surrounding the Party Rallies. Opening hours are weekdays from 9 am to 6 pm and weekends from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €5.

The area and buildings are surprisingly large and it takes a good 15 minutes to walk around the Kongreßhalle to the **Große Straße** (Great Road). This two-km/1.2-mile-long and 60-m/196-ft-wide road was to have been the central axis of the monumental area. It is paved with 60,000 slabs of granite. Immediately after the war, the American forces used it as a landing strip and currently most of it serves as a very good-looking parking lot for the nearby conference center and soccer field.

Walk down the Great Road and turn left once across the Dutzenteich pond to reach the 300-m/1,000-ft-long **Zeppelin Tribune**. Although the columns along the top of the main tribune were destroyed for safety reasons in 1967, the tribune is still instantly recognizable as the place from where Hitler addressed the party faithful. The main and side tribunes provided seating for 60,000, while the field could hold another 100,000. The field is fenced off, but the tribune is open and freely accessible.

LENI RIEFENSTAHL'S TRIUMPH OF THE WILL

The Nazis had a fascination with new technology, especially when useful for propaganda purposes. Virtually all film footage of their crimes were shot by themselves. In 1934, Hitler asked producer Leni Riefenstahl to film the Party Rally. Her *Triumph of the Will* was an excellent documentary, which the Nazis used to brilliant effect as probably the best propaganda film ever made. Parts of this film are shown in the Documentation Center. Her filming of the 1936 Berlin Olympics also set new standards. Riefenstahl always claimed she had no evil intent and saw her films purely as art and a record of events. She was jailed for four years after the war and driven out of filmmaking forever. She went on to become an underwater photographer and once again set new standards, but her name would forever be associated with Hitler. She died in 2002, aged 101.

The Nuremberg Trials

The Nuremberg Trials took place from November 20, 1945 and continued for 218 days. In the dock were 21 top Nazi officials – 12 received the death sentence and were executed on October 16, 1946. Hermann Göring cheated the hangman by committing suicide hours before. Proceedings took place in the **Schwurgerichtssaal 600 - Nürnberger Prozesse** (International Military Tribunal - Nuremberg Trial), Landgericht Nürnberg-Fürth/Schwurgerichtssaal, Further Straße 110, ☎ 0911-231-5421, www.museen.nuernberg.de. The court is still in use and is open weekends only on guided tours that depart on the hour between 1 and 4 pm. Reservations are not possible. Inquire about the availability of English tours. Admission is €2.50. (It is usually possible to look into the court on weekdays but sightseeing is not allowed when the court is in use.) The court is easiest to reach by U-Bahn U1 or U11 (station Bärenschanze.

Defendants in the dock at the Nuremberg Trials

Cultural Events

Nürnberg has a busy cultural schedule with a wide range of performances and styles. In addition to the special events, regular concerts are held in the Meistersingerhalle and inside the Kaiserburg. Information is available from the tourist office or www.tourismus.nuernberg.de if no other details are given.

Rock im Park, www.rock-im-park.de, is an open-air rock festival that attracts international stars. It is held on Pentecost weekend at the Zeppelinfield.

Klassik Open Air is an open-air classical music festival held in the Luitpoldhein Park at the end of July, beginning of August. Admission is free and picnic baskets are welcome.

Internationale Orgelwoche (International Organ Week), ☎ 0911-214-4466, www.ion.nuernberg.de, is held at the end of June, beginning of August and is the oldest and largest religious musical festival in the world.

The **Tucher Ritterspiele** is a knight tournament held in August at the Kaiserburg. It features medieval tournaments and a medieval market.

The **St Lorenzkirche**, ☎ 0911-2446-9937, www.kirchenmusik-st-lorenz.de, is a frequent venue for religious music. On weekdays in May, half-hour organ recitals follow the Männleinlauf at around 12:15 pm. Most 10 am church services on Sunday are accompanied by choral or orchestral music.

The **St Sebaldkirche**, ☎ 0911-214-2525, www.kirchenmusik-st-sebald-nbg.de, is also a popular venue for frequent concerts. About once a month, the church has a musical guided night tour of the church and its history.

Festivals

Nürnberg enjoys a couple of good annual festivals. Although the town is in beer-drinking Franken, it does have a wine festival. The **Fränkische Weinfest** is held annually over two weeks at the end of June and beginning of July. The **Spargelmarkt** (Asparagus Market) is held the last week of May to welcome the start of the asparagus season. The **Altstadtfest** (Old Town Festival) is at the end of September and claims to be the largest in Germany.

Christkindlemarkt *(www.bayern.by)*

The **Nürnberger Christkindlemarkt** (Christmas Market) has a 400-year tradition and is world-famous. It is one of the best in Germany and is held annually from end November to Christmas. It is best to arrive on a Sunday or Monday to avoid the crowds. The month is also a cultural highlight, with musical concerts staged in many churches.

Shopping

A good place to buy arts and crafts is the **Handwerkerhof**, Am Königstor, ☎ 01805-860-700-590. It is a large courtyard with medieval-style small half-timbered houses selling mostly locally made items. Even if you don't want to buy anything, it is interesting to see how much of Nürnberg must have looked prior to 1945. Opening hours are weekdays from 10 am to 6:30 pm and Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm (closed from early January to mid-March).

Nürnberg is famous for two edible products: the finger-size Nürnberger Bratwurst sausages and **Lebkuchen**, which are gingerbread delicacies, especially associated with Christmas but available throughout the year. The best ones are baked without the use of flour. They are usually available in colorful tins that make good souvenirs.

One of the most famous producers is **Lebkuchen Schmidt**, Zollhausstraße 30, ☎ 0911-896-631, www.leckuchen-schmidt.com. It has stores at Plobenhof 6 (at the Hauptmarkt), in the Handwerkerhof, and at the Christmas Market.

The **Trempelmarkt** is Germany's largest open-air flea market and is held twice annually in the Old Town in May and September.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

Nürnberg has an astonishing number of guided walking tours. The tourist office conducts a two-hour guided walking tour in English of the Old Town daily from May to October at 1 pm, departing from the tourist office at Hauptmarkt. Audio guides in English can also be rented from the tourist office for self-guided tours.

Die **Stadtführer**, www.nuernberg.de, conducts a wide range of tours emphasizing history and art. The **Institute for Regional History**, Wiesentalstraße 32, ☎ 0911-307-360, www.geschichte-fuer-alle.de, has frequent tours in the city and region focusing on history.

A night watchwomen, with a PhD to boot, offers night tours of Nürnberg most Friday to Sunday nights from March to December. Four different tours are available and English tours are possible on request. Contact **Dr U Jager**, Marktplatz 6, 91781 Weißenburg, ☎ 09141-997-207, www.nachtwaechterin.de.

Marco Kircher, Postfach 130248, 90114 Nürnberg, ☎ 0175-402-4148, conducts ghost tours of Nürnberg's spooky sites most Friday and Saturday nights from April to December.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Bicycle rentals are available from **Fahrradkiste**, Knauerstraße 9, ☎ 0911-287-9064; **Ride a Rainbow**, Adam-Kraft-Straße 55, ☎ 0911-397-337; or **Play it Again Sports**, Rennweg 7-9, ☎ 0911-538-580.

By Motorized Train

Motorized train (Bimmelbahn) tours of Nürnberg depart frequently from the Hauptmarkt. For details, contact **Altstadtrundfahrten**, Kreulstraße 59E, ☎ 0911-421-919, www.nuernberg-tourist.de. The tour lasts about 40 minutes.

Adventures in the Air

Hot-Air Ballooning: Ballonfahren macht Spaß, Richard-Wagner-Straße 11, 91207 Lauf/Pegnitz, ☎ 09123-99-393, www.ballonfahren.de, flies in the Nürnberg region but also offers longer flights, including crossing the Alps.

Where to Stay & Eat

See pages 50 and 52 for information on hotel and restaurant price codes.

Station Area

The modern **ArabellaSheraton Hotel Carlton** is a comfortable luxury hotel a block from the station. Rooms are spacious and modern, with straight lines and light colors. Eilgutstraße 15, 90443 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-20-030, fax 0911-200-3111, www.carlton-nuernberg.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Le
MERIDIEN
GRAND HOTEL

Le Méridien Grand Hotel

The **Le Méridien Grand Hotel** combines a hundred-year tradition with modern comforts. Rooms have Art Nouveau influences and marble baths. The **Brasserie** (€€-€€€) serves international and regional dishes in upscale surroundings with ample use of marble, mirrors, and carved glass. Bahnhofstraße 1, 90443 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-23-220, fax 0911-232-2444, www.grand-hotel.de. (€€€€)

The **Maritim Hotel** has large, stylishly furnished rooms using light wood and warm colors. The **Nürnberger Stuben** (€€-€€€) is rustic, yet luxurious and serves international cuisine in addition to regional favorites. Frauentorgraben 11, 90443 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-23-630, fax 0911-236-3851, www.maritim.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **InterCity Hotel** offers good value in the same area close to the station. Rooms are comfortably furnished and well equipped. The room key gives free access to public transportation. Eilgutstraße 8, 90443 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-24-780, fax 0911-247-8999, www.steigenberger.de. (€€-€€€)

The best value is offered by the two Ibis hotels close to the station. Rooms are clean, bright, and equipped with the necessities. The **Ibis Marientor** is just outside the city walls behind the Grand Hotel. Königstorgraben 9, 90402 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-24-090, fax 0911-240-9413, www.ibishotel.com. (€) The new **Ibis Königstor** is just inside the Old Town, close to the Handwerkerhof. Königstraße 74, 90402 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-232-000, fax 0911-209-684, www.ibishotel.com. (€€)

Old Town

Although the top hotels are near the Hauptbahnhof, some pleasant hotels can also be found inside the Altstadt itself. The Sebald area is north of the river towards the castle and Lorenz to the south nearer to the station.

Sebald Area

Two small hotels with modern rooms and facilities are near the Dürer House. The **Hotel Agneshof** is pleasantly located in the heart of the Old Town. Rooms are modern and stylish. Most look out on the courtyard but some have balconies facing the Kaisersburg. Agnessgasse 10, 90403 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-214-440, fax 0911-2144-4140, www.agneshof-nuernberg.de. (€€€-€€€€)

BIER BAR
HOTEL GARNI
ALBRECHT DÜRER
HOTEL GARNI
ALBRECHT DÜRER
Lebküchnerei

Dürer Hotel

The **Dürer Hotel** is thoroughly modern and close to its namesake's museum. Rooms are comfortable and furnished mostly with light wood. Neutormauer 32, 90403 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-214-6650, fax 0911-2146-6555, www.altstadthotels-nuernberg.de. (€€€)

Several pleasant, informal restaurants with terraces enliven the scene at the picturesque Tiergärtenplatz in between the Dürer Haus and the Kaisersburg. However, some nearby restaurants offer a more upscale experience.

Leading the way, with a Michelin star, is **Essigbrätlein**, Weinmarkt 3, ☎ 0911-225-131, close to the Sebaldkirche. This comfortable, refined restaurant is located in the oldest guesthouse in town; the building dates from 1550. Nouvelle cuisine and the chef's own creations are offered. (€€€-€€€€)

Nearby is **Goldenes Posthorn**, Glöckleingasse 2, ☎ 0911-225-153, dating back to 1498. It claims to be Germany's oldest wine cellar. Local specialties feature prominently on the menu that also includes international cuisine. (€-€€€)

Lorenz Area

The **Victoria Hotel** is in a 100-year-old sandstone building next to the Museum of Modern Design. Rooms are comfortable and have lightwood furniture. Königstraße 80, 90402 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-24-050, fax 0911-227-432, www.hotelvictoria.de. (€€-€€€€)

Hotel Am Jakobsmarkt is in a side street near the Weisser Turm. Rooms are comfortably furnished and those in the attached half-timbered wings have a rustic atmosphere, some with exposed beams. Schottengasse 5, 90402 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-20-070, fax 0911-200-7200, www.hotel-am-jakobsmarkt.de. (€€-€€€)

Romantik Hotel Am Josephsplatz

The **Romantik Hotel Am Josephsplatz** is in a building dating back to 1675. Rooms are furnished in either a rustic or an Italian style. Josephsplatz 30, 90403 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-90-403, fax 0911-214-470, www.romantikhotels.com. (€€€)

Ishihara, Schottengasse 3, ☎ 0911-226-395, near Weisser Turm, is a good place for Japanese food. In addition to sushi, teppanyaki is prepared at the table. (€€-€€€)

The **Nassauer Keller**, Karolinenstraße 2, ☎ 0911-225-967, inside Nuremberg's oldest private house, serves mainly regional specialties. The entrance door is low and the stairway down is steep, as is to be expected from such an old building. (€€-€€€)

Bratwurst Restaurants

NÜRNBERGER BRATWÜRSTCHEN

Nürnberg's most famous contribution to German cuisine is the small finger size sausages served all over town and in many other German cities too. By law, the sausages must be between seven and nine cm/2.7 and 3½ inches long and weigh between 20 and 25 grams/.7 to .9 ounces. They may only contain pork meat – no innards – encased in sheep entrails. Of course, they need to be produced inside the city limits in order to add "Nürnberg" to the name. They are a favorite in many German kitchens and at grill parties as most are sold already cooked, requiring only some grilling to warm them up and perfect the flavor.

Bratwurst is available all over town but the three restaurants listed below are the most famous and they still grill over beech wood fires. Most serve other regional dishes as well, but ordering them is akin to requesting steak in a fish restaurant. The bratwurst is traditionally served with sauerkraut and potatoes, washed down with local beer. Keep count of the bread and pretzels consumed during the meal as it is charged for separately.

Historische Bratwurstküche Zum Golden Stern, Zirkelschmiedsgasse 26, ☎ 0911-205-9288, dates from 1419 and claims to be the oldest bratwurst restaurant in town. It is close to Färbertor. (€-€€)

Das Bratwurstglöcklein

Das Bratwurstglöcklein, Im Handwerkerhof, ☎ 0911-227-625, is inside the picturesque Handwerkershof at Königstor. The sausages are served on bell-shaped plates by waitresses in traditional costumes. (€-€€)

A personal favorite is the **Bratwursthäusle**, Rathausplatz 1, ☎ 0911-227-695, in the morning shade of St Sebaldkirche. It has a small, rustic room, where smaller parties have to share tables, and a pleasant terrace with views of the passersby. (€-€€)

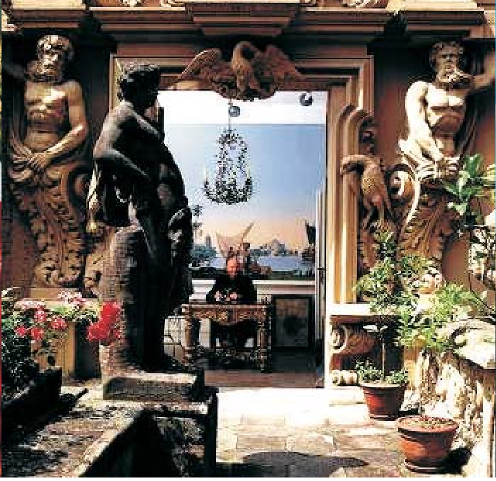
Youth Hostel

The **DJH Nürnberg** has a fabulous location inside the former stables of the Kaiserburg with great views of the Old Town. It is closed over Christmas. Burg 2, 90403 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-230-9360, fax 0911-2309-3611.

Camping

Knaus Campingpark is at the Dutzenteich near the Nazi Party Rallying grounds four km/2.4 miles south of central Nürnberg. It has excellent facilities, with 150 often shady lots and it's open year-round. Hans-Kalb-Straße 56, 90471 Nürnberg, ☎ 0911-981-2717, fax 0911-981-2718, www.knauscamping.de.

DJH Nürnberg



Oberfranken/ Upper Franconia

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Bamberg 291
- Coburger Land 308
- Frankenwald 322
- Bayreuth 334

Oberfranken is the northeastern corner of Bavaria. The region is a mixture of historically quite separate entities. The Bishopric of Bamberg and the Duchy of Brandenburg-Bayreuth ruled large areas here and their seats of government are still the most interesting towns in the region. Bamberg's historical core is on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list while Bayreuth is most famous for its annual Wagner Festival. Coburg, with a marvelous fortress and close links to the British monarchy, only became part of Bavaria in 1920.

Bamberg

Bamberg is one of Germany‘s most beautiful towns. Its main attractions are the protected buildings that led to the town being included on the **UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list**. There are some 2,300 of them.

Bamberg has a written history going back to 902, but its moment came in 1007 when **Emperor Heinrich II** founded a bishopric and erected an imperial palace in the town. In contrast to his immediate predecessors and successors, he concentrated his attention on Germany, rather than Italy, and wanted Bamberg to be the new Rome north of the Alps. Appropriately, Bamberg was built on seven hills too. As with other Episcopal towns in the region, the clergy chose the high

Facing page: St Michael's in Bamberg viewed from the Rose Garden ground and frequently came into conflict with the citizens who settled in the valley.

It was during the **Schönborn period** (1693-1746), when two bishops from the Schönborn family reigned, that Bamberg received its Baroque look. In addition to several new buildings commissioned by the Schönborns and other rich citizens, many medieval buildings received a Baroque makeover. The most impressive buildings in Bamberg are from this period and mostly found in the former bishop's town.

In 1803, following secularization, Bamberg became part of Bavaria. After the First World War, it briefly served as capital of Bavaria while Munich was in the hands of revolutionaries. World War II left Bamberg virtually unscathed.

Information Sources

Tourist Information, Geyerswörthstraße 3, 96047 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-297-6200, www.bamberg.info.

Bamberg Card: The tourist office sells the Bamberg Card for €8. It is valid for 48 hours and includes a free guided tour of the city, unlimited use of public buses, and free admission into the following museums: Diözesan, Historisches, Naturkunde, Sammlung Ludwig, and Levi Strauss. If visiting the latter by train, the Bamberg Card allows a one-way ticket to be used as a return ticket. It also includes further small discounts on admission tickets and services in Bamberg.

Getting Around

The train station is a 10-minute walk from the Old Town. Follow Luitpoldstraße, turn right into Obere Königsstraße and then cross the Main-Danube-Canal on Kettenbrücke into the Old Town. Alternatively, several bus lines run from the station to the ZOB (Central Bus Station) near Maximiliansplatz. Most travel to Bamberg requires changeovers at Würzburg, an hour away on at least hourly trains.

Sightseeing

The major sights in Bamberg can be grouped into two distinct areas – both within the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage listed zone. The original Bürgerstadt, now often referred to as Inselstadt (Island Town), is on the area between the Main-Danube

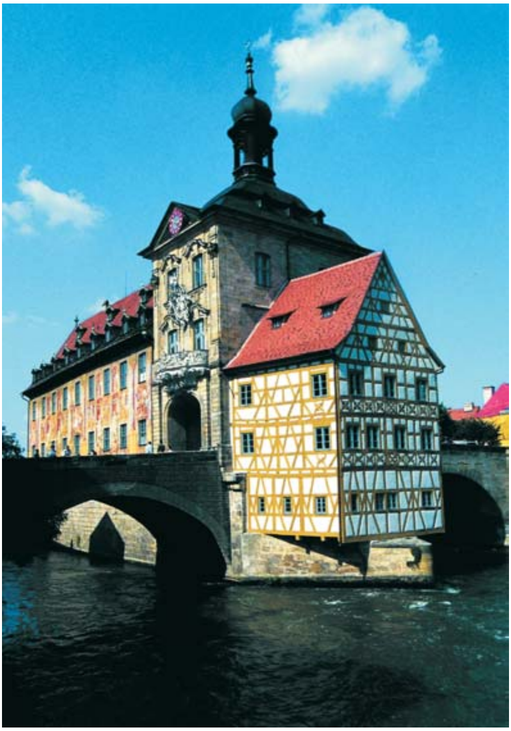
Canal and the Regnitz River. It is here that the civilians lived, while the Episcopal area is the higher ground to the west of the Regnitz. This area previously referred to as the Bischofsstadt (Bishop's City) is nowadays called Bergstadt (Hill Town) and has the largest and most impressive buildings in Bamberg.

Inselstadt

The citizens' Old Town area is dominated by two large squares. **Maximiliansplatz** is surrounded by Baroque buildings – the large former priest seminary is now used as **Rathaus** (Town Hall). The long, narrow **Grüner Markt** (Green Market) is also lined by Baroque buildings, including the **St Martins-Kirche** (St Martin's Church), a work by Georg Dientzenhofer, with a painted cupola. It is open daily from 8 am to 6pm, Thursday only from 1 pm. The fountain on the market square with a sculpture of Neptune, locally known as the Gabelmann (literally, "fork man"), dates from 1698.

The **Naturkunde Museum** (Natural History Museum), Fleischstraße 2, ☎ 0951-863-1248, was built in 1795 as one of the first museums in Germany. Of special note is the early Classical Vogelsaal (Bird Hall) with its original display cabinets. In addition to the large ornithology section, it has displays on fossils, geology, the environment, and some stuffed animals, including a rare quagga. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, April to September from 9 am to 5 pm and October to March from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €1.50.

The **Altes Rathaus** (Old Town Hall) is, with the Dom, the most famous sight in Bamberg. It is on a small island between the civilian and religious towns. According to legend, the bishop refused to give land for the building so the burghers drove poles into the Regnitz River to extend the small island and erect a suitably large town hall. Different coats of arms indicated whether you were exiting to the bishop's or bur-



Altes Rathaus *(www.bayern.by)*

ghers' town. The core of the building is 15th-century Gothic but it received a Baroque exterior during the mid-18th century. Note the angel's leg sticking out at the bottom of the wall in an attempt to add a 3-D effect!

On the south side of the Rathaus is the **Rottmeisterhaus**, a half-timbered building that seems to piggyback on the main building. It was erected in 1686 on the pontoon of the bridge but from many angles it seem to float in the air. The Altes Rathaus now houses the **Sammlung Ludwig** (Ludwig Collection), Obere Brücke 1a, ☎ 0951-871-871, a mostly Baroque porcelain collection donated by the Ludwigs (an art loving couple that donated huge collections to several German museums during the 20th century). Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm. Admission is €3.50.

Klein Venedig *(Bamberg Tourismus)*

The best views of the Altes Rathaus are upstream from the bridge leading to **Schloss Geyerswörth**. This former bishop's residence now houses the tourist office, which provides the key for access to the tower, with its fine views. The **Unteres Brücke**, on the opposite side of the Rathaus, has good views of the former fishermen's houses that are often referred to as **Klein Venedig** (Little Venice). Although many buildings in Bamberg have medieval cores, this is one of the few areas where the medieval exteriors have not changed during the rush to make the whole town Baroque.

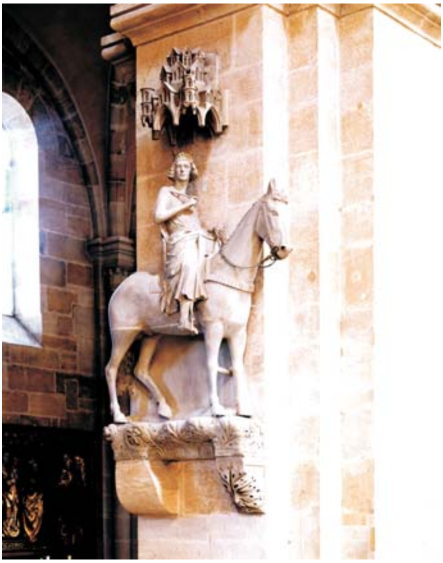
Bergstadt

Domberg

The four-tower **Dom** (Cathedral), Domplatz, was consecrated in 1237. It replaced the original church, erected on the orders of Heinrich II in 1012, which burned down twice. The newer church is mainly Gothic but with strong Romanesque influences – the plans were altered about 20 times during its construction as traditionalists argued with more

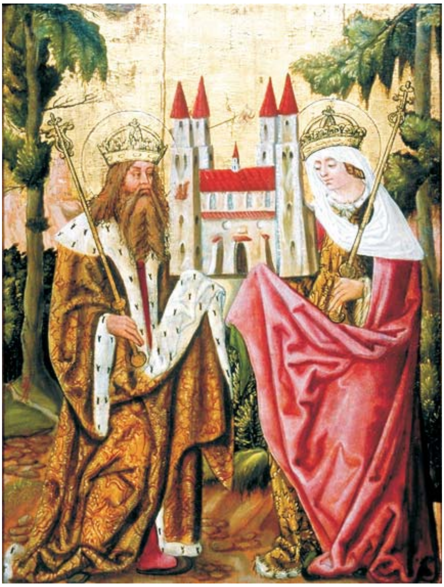
Dom (Bamberg Tourismus)

progressives over the suitability of the new *French* style. The result is one of the most impressive medieval buildings in Germany. The **Fürstenportal** (Princes' Portal), facing the Domplatz, has 10 recessed arches and an interesting relief of the Last Judgment. The **Adamspforte** (Adam Gate), on the south side, is the main entrance.



Bamberger Reiter (Bamberg Tourismus)

Most of the interior walls are bare as Bavarian King Ludwig I stripped off the medieval paintwork in the 19th century, but some early reliefs can still be seen in the choir. The most famous artwork in the church is the **Bamberger Reiter** (Bamberg Knight) by an unknown artist. This 13th-century equestrian statue of a king is an idealized view of the medieval world, but mystery surrounds its creator and, in fact, who it is supposed to represent. It is the oldest completely preserved equestrian statue from the Middle Ages and was one of the first made since the fall of the Roman Empire. The assumption is that it shows King Stephan of Hungary, but many other theories exist. The Nazis used it as a symbol of Aryan perfection. No less impressive is **St Heinrichs-Grab** (St Henry's Tomb) in the east choir. It was carved between 1499 and 1513 by Tilman Riemenschneider as a suitable memorial to Heinrich II, founder of the cathedral, and his wife Kunigunde. Both were declared saints. (That was fortunate. When Mathilda, the wife of Heinrich I, was


Heinrich II and Kunigunde

declared a saint, his body was removed from their joint grave in Quedlinburg and subsequently lost in a church fire!) In the south transept, note the incomplete **Marienaltar** (Mary Altar – 1523) carved from lime wood by Veit Stoß. He carved it while in his 70s without studio help. It was commissioned by his son, a prior in Nürnberg, but he was kicked out of Nürnberg after the city decided for the Lutheran Reformation. Stoß never received his payment. In the west choir is the **grave of Pope Clemens II**, the only papal tomb north of the Alps. Opening hours are daily from 8 am to 5 pm. The choir performs during the 8:45 am service on Sunday.

The **Diözesanmuseum** (Diocesan Museum), Domkapitelhaus, Domplatz 5, ☎ 0951-502-325, is entered through the south aisle of the cathedral. The building was designed by Balthasar Neumann. It has the usual collection of lapidary remains and vestments. Of special note is Heinrich II's Blue Coat of Stars and the original statues of Adam and Eve from the Adamspforte – the first nudes in German art. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

Alte Hofhaltung *(Asio otus)*

The **Alte Hofhaltung** (Old Residence) was erected mostly in the 16th century as residence for the bishop. It was built on the site of the 11th-century Kaiserspfalz (Imperial Palace) but most of the visible façades are Renaissance. The doorway has a statue of Heinrich II and his wife Kunigunde with a model of the cathedral. The inner courtyard contains Gothic half-timbered buildings. The

Historisches Museum (History Museum), Domplatz 7, ☎ 0951-5190746, is in the same building. It has mostly maps and historical document on display, which may be of little interest to non-German speakers. Opening hours are May to October from Tuesday to Sunday 9 am to 5 pm. Admission is €3.

Neue Residenz *(Berthold Werner)*

The **Neue Residenz** (New Residence), Domplatz 8, ☎ 0951-519-390, is the largest building in Bamberg. Construction started in 1613 but most of the work was done by Johann Dientzenhofer in 1697-1703 for Prince Bishop Lothar von Schönborn. The interior has historical rooms and a painting gallery with old German masters and Baroque paintings. In the **Kaisersaal** (Emperor's Hall), with frescos by Melchior Steidl, Napoleon signed the declaration of war with Prussia on October 6, 1806. Opening hours are daily from April to September 9 am to 6 pm and from October to March 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €4.

In one wing of the Neue Residenz is the **Staatsbibliothek** (National Library), Domplatz 8, ☎ 0951-955-030. It is worth entering to see the lovely public reading room and small, frequently changing exhibitions of notable works. Opening hours are weekdays from 9 am to 5 pm and Saturday from 9 am to noon. Admission is free.

Michaelskirche from the Rosengarten *(Richard Schubert)*

The **Rosengarten** (Rose Garden), behind the Residenz, has good views of the town. It is a formal, Baroque garden designed by Balthasar Neumann, with some 4,500 roses. It has a pleasant, slightly formal café. Admission is free, with the same opening hours as the Neue Residenz.

The Michaelsberg

The **Michaelsberg** is north of the Domberg and has good views of the Old Town. It housed a Benedictine monastery from 1015 until 1803. A fire destroyed much of the monastery and it was rebuilt in 1610 in Gothic style. During the 18th century, much of the complex received a Baroque makeover courtesy of the Dientzenhofer brothers.

Most of the former monastery is now a home for the aged but a small part is used for the **Fränkisches Brauereimuseum** (Franconian Brewery Museum), Michaelsberg 10f, ☎ 0951-53-016, www.bierstadt.de/museum. It has a small exhibition on the history of beer making in the region as well as models and a display of traditional brewing equipment. Opening hours are April to October Wednesday to Sunday from 1 to 5 pm. Admission is €2 – no free sampling, but a beer garden is at hand.

The **Michaelskirche** (St Michael's Church), erected between the 12th and 15th centuries, has a ceiling fresco with 578 flowers and medicinal herbs. It is open daily from 9 am to 6 pm.

To get to the Michaelsberg from the Domplatz, either follow the road between the two residences via Jakobsplatz, or take the walkway through the park across from the Rosengarten. Alternatively, use Bus 10 from the Domplatz to the top.

Kaulberg

Kaulberg is south of the Domberg. The citizens of Bamberg constructed around 50 churches so, not surprisingly, there are a number of religious edifices worth seeing here.

The **Karmelitenkloster** (Carmelite Monastery), Karmelitenplatz 1, ☎ 0951-95-290, originally belonged to the Cistercian order but changed to the Carmelite order during the 16th century. The main reason to visit is to see one of the largest Romanesque cloisters in Germany. Recent research indicates that these were built in the 14th century, long after the Romanesque went out of fashion, and not during the 13th century as previously assumed. Little can be seen of the original Romanesque church though – it received a Johann Leonhard Dientzenhofer Baroque makeover. Opening hours are daily from 9 to 11:30 am and 2:30 to 5:30 pm.

Obere Pfarre

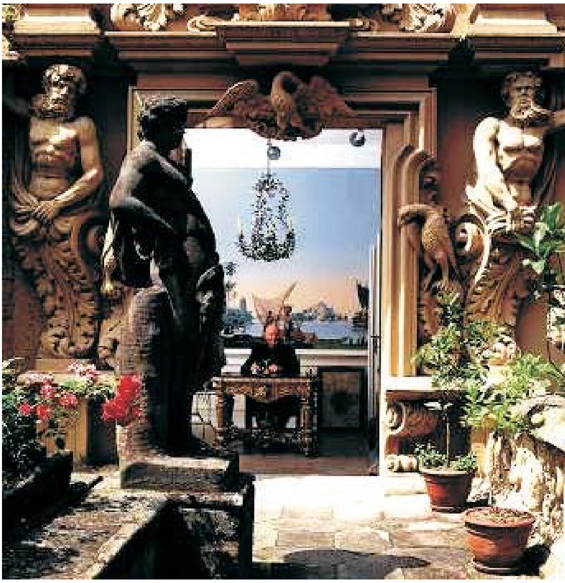
Bamberg's most important Gothic building is the **Obere Pfarre**, Unter Kaulberg. It was financed by the citizens and construction started in 1338. Of particular artistic note is the Brautportal (Bridal Portal) with its Gothic statues. The interior received the customary Baroque makeover and has a Tintoretto painting of the *Assumption of Mary*.

Stephansberg

Nearby is **St Stephan**, Stephansplatz 4, the main Lutheran church in Bamberg. It was erected in the 11th century and consecrated in person by Pope Benedict VIII in 1020. The present church is mostly from the 17th century and the style is best described as neo-Gothic-Baroque. It is open daily from 9 am to 5 pm.

Two secular buildings in the area are worth seeing – both Baroque palaces owned by a rich privy counselor, Johann Ignaz Tobias Böttinger. The **Böttingerhaus**, Judengasse 14, was erected in an Italian *palazzo* style between 1707 and 1713. It is the loveliest civilian palace in town. The architect might have been Johann Dientzenhofer. However, with a family of 14, Böttinger soon found room a bit tight.

Dientzenhofer definitely was the architect of the Baroque **Wasserschloss Concordia** (Moated Castle), Concordiastraße 28, www.villa-concordia.de, which Böttinger had erected between 1716 and 1722. It is owned by the town and used as an artists' home, with occasional exhibitions. It is best seen from Mühlwörth on the opposite bank of the Regnitz.



Detail of the Böttingerhaus

Altenburg

The Altenburg is on the highest and westernmost of Bamberg's seven hills. The original castle dates from 1109 and served as stronghold of the Bamberg bishops. However, it was destroyed in 1553 during the Margrave Wars (see *Kulmbach*). It was heavily restored during the early 20th century. The main reason to visit is for the views of the Old Town – even better on the one-hour hike from the Old Town. The interior can only be seen by prior arrangement – ☎ 0951-53-387. The pleasant **Restaurant Altenburg**, Altenburg 1, ☎ 0951-56-828, www.restaurant-altenburg.de, serves mostly local cuisine (€€). It is possible to drive up to the castle – follow Altenburger Straße from the Dom area. The courtyards and some bastions are open for free during daylight hours but closed on Mondays.

Farther Afield

Levi Strauss Museum in Buttenheim

A chance discovery during the 1980s put Buttenheim on the international tourist map. It was discovered that one **Loeb Strauss** (1829-1902) was born here. He left for America at age 18 and, after spending time in New York, moved west to supply the miners of the Californian gold rush with clothes and other supplies. By then he was already known as Levi Strauss and in 1873 patented the design of denim jeans. The rest is history and is explained in the **Geburthaus Levi Strauss Museum** (Birth House), Marktstraße 33, 96155 Buttenheim, ☎ 09545-442-602, www.levi-strauss-museum.de. The museum is in the restored house where he was born – the exterior color scheme is original. The museum's oldest pair of jeans is from 1890 but, due to their frailty, the one actually on display is a copy. Opening hours are Tuesday and Thursday from 2 to 6 pm and weekends from 11 am to 5 pm. Admission is €2.60.

Buttenheim is 20 km/12 miles south of Bamberg. The museum is a 15-minute walk from the train station. Holders of the Bamberg Card have free admission to the museum and need only pay one-way if using the train to and from Bamberg.

Ebrach

Founded in 1127, Kloster Ebrach became the first Cistercian monastery east of the Rhine. The 13th-century **Klosterkirche** (Abbey Church) is a good example of early Gothic, Cistercian architecture. The nave is 85 m/280 ft long but lost some of its impact due to the addition of a less stark early Classical interior during the 18th century by Materno Bossi. The **Michaelskapelle** (St Michael's Chapel) at the north side kept its original 12th-century interior. The magnificent rose window in the western façade is a copy made in 1866 – the original is in the Bavarian National Museum in Munich. The Rococo organ and the church are used for occasional concerts. The church is open daily from April to October at 10 am to noon and 2 to 6 pm. Admission is free.

The rather grand **Kloster Ebrach** (Monastery), ☎ 09553-170, was one of the first large Baroque monasteries in Franken. It was erected in two main phases. In the late 17th century, Johann Leonard Dientzenhofer built the north and east wings. In the early 18th century, Josef Greising finished the building with contributions from Balthasar Neumann, who clearly was inspired by Schloss Weißenstein in his design of the impressive ceremonial staircase. For centuries, the monastery attempted to break free from the rule of the bishop of Würzburg, but when that freedom came in 1802, it was followed by secularization only a year later. Ebrach became part of Bavaria and more than 50 monks were sent on pension. By the mid-19th century, this Baroque

Kloster Ebrach

monastery was converted into a jail and since the mid-20th century, it has been a correction center for juvenile offenders. It still serves this function – as a result, only the ceremonial staircase, the Kaisersaal, and a small exhibition can be seen on guided tours daily from April to October at 10:30 am and 2:30 pm. Admission is €1.50. The abbey gardens are open during the same months for free from 8 am to dusk.

For details on these two sights as well as the concerts held in the church, contact **Verkehrsamt Ebrach**, Rathausplatz 2, 96157 Ebrach, ☎ 09553-92-200, www.ebrach.de.

Ebrach is 30 km/19 miles west of Bamberg along the B22 and best visited by car or bicycle.

Vierzehnheiligen in Bad Staffelstein

Basilika Vierzehnheiligen

About five km/three miles outside Bad Staffelstein, halfway up a hill, is the magnificent Baroque **Basilika Vierzehnheiligen** (Basilica of the 14 Saints), Franziskanerkloster, Vierzehnheiligen 2, Bad Staffelstein, ☎ 09571-95080, www.vierzehnheiligen.de. It is arguably the best Rococo church in Franken and some considered this work of Balthasar Neumann an even greater accomplishment than the Residenz in Würzburg.

In 1445 and 1446, a local shepherd saw three visions of Christ and 14 saints. Shortly afterwards a miraculous healing assured the site's future as a pilgrimage site. A chapel was constructed at the very spot but, by the 18th century, a larger structure was needed to accommodate the droves of pilgrims. In 1742, construction of the new church designed by Balthasar Neumann began. When Neumann visited the site two years later, he was horrified to find that the local building master Gottfried Heinrich Krohne had shortened the nave. As a result, there was no space for the Mercy Altar in the crossing and Neumann had to move it to the center of the church. The church was consecrated in 1772, 19 years after Neumann's death.

The church is built from yellow ochre sandstone. The western façade with two high, slender spires is adorned by statues, which were once gilded, and other typically Rococo decorations. The rest of the external walls are rather straight and plain, in great contrast to the interior, which is a series of intersecting oval rotundas. The decorations are clearly Rococo but very stylish and less busy than so many other similar churches. In the center of the church is the huge **Gnadenaltar** (Mercy Altar) – a Rococo masterpiece by a number of artists, primarily Johann Michael Feichtmayr. The altar has statues of the 14 Nothelfer (Auxiliary Saints). The frescos illustrating scenes from the lives of the 14 saints are somewhat faded due to water damage in the 19th century.

The basilica is open all year during daylight hours. Admission is free.

Bad Staffelstein can be reached by twice-hourly direct trains from Bamberg in 15 to 25 minutes.

Schloss Weißenstein in Pommersfelden

Pommersfelden is a small town 25 km/16 miles southwest of Bamberg. The main reason to visit is to see Schloss Weißenstein – one of the loveliest Baroque palaces in Germany.

When Franz Lothar von Schönborn inherited a medieval moated castle in Pommersfelden, he was probably not particularly happy. He abhorred medieval architecture. As prince bishop of Bamberg, he was restricted due to lack of funds in his plans to build a magnificent Baroque residence. However, as prince elector and archbishop of Mainz, he was *ex officio* also chancellor of the Holy Roman Empire and, after the emperor gave him a large cash reward, he ploughed much of it into building Schloss Weißenstein. Johann Dientzenhofer became the main architect with Franz Lothar closely involved in planning even the smallest details. The Viennese imperial court architect Johann Lucas von Hildebrandt gave some advice on the interior although Franz Lothar rejected out of hand any attempt to alter the double staircase – still one of the most attractive features of the palace and at that time only found here as well as in the Louvre in Paris. The palace was completed in 1718 and remained in the hands of the Schönborn family until they transferred it to a trust in 1996. The isolated location spared the Schloss from war damage except for some looting during the Seven Years' War. The original Baroque garden was replaced by an English landscape garden during the 19th century.

Schloss Weißenstein *(Kumbayo)*

The interior of the palace can only be seen on hourly guided tours. The tour includes the impressive double staircase, the cave hall, the remarkable marble hall, the hall of mirrors, as well as the private rooms of the bishop. Around 600 paintings are still on display – during Franz Lothar's time the pictures hung literally frame to frame – including works by Rubens, Van Dyck, Titian, and Dürer.

Schloss Weißenstein, 96178 Pommersfelden, ☎ 09548-98-180, www.schoenborn.de, is open daily from April to October with tours on the hour from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €6. The park is open year-round, with admission €1 if seen separately from the palace. The Schloss is best visited by car or bicycle.

From mid-July to mid-August classical music concerts are staged in the Schloss. Information and tickets are available from **Schlossverwaltung**, 96178 Pommersfelden, ☎ 09548-9818-68, www.collegium-musicum.info.

Where to Sleep & Eat

Schlosshotel Pommersfelden is in the Marstall buildings opposite the courtyard from the main palace. Rooms are bright and functionally furnished. The ones in the Marstall building are more pleasant than the cheaper ones in the Ökonomietrakt. The **restaurant** (€€) serves local and international dishes. 96178 Pommersfelden, ☎ 09548-680, fax 09548-68-100, www.schlosshotel-pommersfelden.de. (€€)

Schlosshotel Pommersfelden

Cultural Events & Festivals

Concerts are frequently scheduled in various historical halls, courtyards, and gardens. The tourist information can provide a schedule and usually make reservations too. A good source is www.kultur.bamberg.de.

Bamberg has its own world-class symphony orchestra, the **Bamberger Symphoniker**, www.bamberger-symphoniker.de. The orchestra was formed after World War II, mostly by musicians who fled from Prague. It usually plays in the modern, late-20th-century Konzert- und Kongresshalle "Sinfonie an der Regnitz," Mußstraße 1, just north of the Old Town, but is often heard in more historic venues such as the Kaisersaal in the Neue Residenz and in the Dom as well.

From May to October, short organ concerts are held in the **Dom**, www.bamberger-dommusik.de, on Saturday at noon – admission is free. Longer concerts at night, usually but not exclusively religious music, charge admission.

Plays are staged in the **ETA Hofmann Theater**. E.T.A.-Hoffmann-Platz 1, ☎ 0951-873-030, www.theater.bamberg.de, named after the mystery writer who resided in Bamberg in the early 19th century.

Like virtually all German towns, Bamberg has a Christmas market. However, unique to Bamberg is the **Krippenweg** (Cribs Route). During advent and up to January 6, over 30 large nativity scenes are on view in several churches, squares, and museums. A detailed brochure on the route and opening hours is available from the tourist office.

Shopping

Antiques

About 30 antique dealers are located in the narrow alleys between the Altes Rathaus and the Domberg. This allows for variety and fair prices, but bargains are hard to find. The **Bamberger Antiquitätenwochen** (Antiques Weeks) are held annually from end July to end August, attracting many dealers and buyers.

Adventures

On Foot

Town Walks

Two-hour guided walking tours of the Old Town sights are arranged by the tourist office from April to October Monday to Saturday at 10:30 am and 2 pm, and on Sunday at 11 am.

The self-guided **Bierschmeckertour** (Beer Lover's Tour) is available for €20 from the tourist office. The fee includes a backpack, a color guide to the best beer sights, and five vouchers for a pint of beer in several restaurants. Although this tour has been criticized of late for encouraging alcohol consumption, there are few signs of it going out of fashion.

On Wheels

By Bicycle

Bamberg's seven hills make cycling an unattractive option. The surrounding countryside is more appealing, with a number of long-distance routes passing through town. The 400-km/250-mile **Main Radweg** leads from near Kulmbach and Bayreuth past Bamberg to the confluence of the Main with the Rhine. For lovers of Baroque, the 200-km/125-mile **Fürstbischöfliche Radtour** (Prince Bishop's Cycling Route) is unbeatable as it passes all the main Baroque sights associated with the bishops. Beer lovers may find the **Brauereien und Bierkeller** (Breweries and Beer Cellars Tour) irresistible. It starts from Bamberg and can be done in a small circular route of 62 km/38 miles or the full circular route of just over 200 km/125 miles. Beer mixed with lemonade is called a *Radler* (literally, "cyclist") and the recommended drink (cyclists in Germany are subject to the same regulations and fines as car drivers).

The sights described below under *Farther Afield* are easily reached by bicycle from Bamberg. Other major cities are also within cycling distance. It is an easy 40-km/25-mile ride to Nürnberg along either side of the Main-Danube canal. It is just over 60 km/38 miles to Bayreuth, following mostly the flow of the Main River.

Bicycles can be rented from **Zweirad Shop**, Siechenstraße 3, ☎ 0951-203-477; **Fahrrad Dratz**, Pödeldorfer Straße 190, ☎ 0951-12428; or **Radsport Käs**, Nürnberger Straße 151, ☎ 0951-130388.

Where to Stay & Eat

For hotel and restaurant price code information, see pages 50 and 52.

The **Hotel Residenzschloss Bamberg** is at the edge of the Old Town in a former hospital and the bishop's residence, as well as in a modern wing. Rooms are luxurious. The stylish **restaurants** (€€-€€€) serve mainly international cuisine. Untere Sandstraße 32, 96049 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-60-910, fax 0951-609-1701, www.residenzschloss.com. (€€€€)

Hotel Residenzschloss Bamberg

The **Bamberger Hof Bellevue** is a first-class hotel in the heart of the Old Town – the best rooms have views of the Dom. Although rooms range in style from turn of the 19th century to thoroughly modern, all are comfortable and well equipped. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves French cuisine. Schönleinsplatz 4, 96047 Bamberg, ☎ 0931-98-550, fax 0931-985-862, www.bambergerhof.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Villa Geyerswörth** is in four connected villas on an island in the center of the Old Town. Rooms are mostly in a Tuscan style. The restaurant **La Villa** (€€) is a good choice for Italian food. Geyerswörthstraße 15 - 21a, 96047 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-91-740, fax 0951-917-4500, www.villageyersworth.de. (€€€-€€€€)

MESSERSCHMITT

Romantik Hotel Weinhaus Messerschmitt

A good place to stay is the **Romantik Hotel Weinhaus Messerschmitt**. The hotel is in a building dating partly from 1422 and the hotel itself has a 170-year tradition. The exterior is white and yellow while the interior makes ample use of wood. Rooms are furnished using either antique or modern furniture. The highly rated **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves international and nouvelle cuisine. Lange Straße 41, 96047 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-297-800, fax 0951-297-8029, www.hotel-messerschmitt.de. (€€€)

Hotel St Nepomuk is beautifully situated next to the Regnitz River in the former milling quarters. Rooms are comfortably furnished. Some have exposed half-timbered beams. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves international and local specialties and offers spectacular views of the Old Town. Obere Mühlbrücke 9, 96047 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-98-420, fax 0951-984-2100, www.hotel-nepomuk.de. (€€€)

Hotel Alt-Ringlein

Hotel Alt Ringlein

The **Barock-Hotel am Dom** is next to the cathedral. Behind its beautiful façade are 20 comfortable rooms. The stairways are Baroque; the breakfast room is Gothic. Vorderer Bach 4, 96049 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-54-031, fax 0951-54-021. (€€)

In the same vicinity, in a converted 16th-century building, is **Hotel Alt Ringlein**. Rooms are rustic, but with modern comforts. The **restaurant** (€€) serves hearty, local dishes. Dominikanerstraße 9, 96049 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-95-320, fax 0951-953-2500, www.alt-ringlein.com. (€€)

The **Ibis Hotel** is at the edge of the Old Town. Rooms are functionally furnished. The hotel offers limited character but prices remain low even during events. Theatergassen 10, 96047 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-980-480, fax 0951-9804-8452, www.ibishotel.com. (€€)

Near the Dom is **Ristorante V. Via Veneto**, Obere Sandstraße 32, ☎ 0951-519-1691. It serves excellent, upmarket Italian cuisine. (€€-€€€)

Traditional Brewery Taverns

Beer plays a major role in Bamberg's economy and way of life. There are still nine independent breweries in town and several traditional taverns to enjoy the local produce with mostly hearty, regional cuisine. Most do not accept credit cards. The best-known local beer is the dark-red *Rauchbier*, literally smoked beer, brewed from smoked malts.

Brauereigasthof Spezial is in between the station and the pedestrian zone. The brewery smokes all its beers and they can be sampled with traditional food in the pleasant tavern (€). A few simple rooms, some with shared bathrooms, are also available for overnight guests. Obere Königstraße 10, 96052 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-24304, fax 0951-26330, www.brauerei-spezial.de. (€)

Schlenkerla, Dominikanerstraße 6, ☎ 0951-56-060, close to the Dom, is a traditional brewery that has been producing *Rauchbier* since 1678. (€-€€)

Klosterbräu, Obere Mühlbrücke 1-3, ☎ 0951-52-265, is the oldest brewery in Bamberg and has been operating since 1533. It brews mostly dark beers. The tavern is in a lovely half-timbered building with a beer garden in the courtyard. Food is rather basic. (€)

The **Hofbräu**, Karolinenstraße 7, ☎ 0951-53-321, is very close to the Altes Rathaus. It is as much café as tavern, making it a good choice for non-beer drinkers too. The food is mostly regional but with a light touch. (€-€€)

Youth Hostel

The **DJH Bamberg Wolfsschlucht** is about 15 minutes walk south of the Old Town in the suburb of Bug. It can also be reached by Bus 18 from the bus station. It is closed from mid-December to end January. Oberer Leinritt 70, 96049 Bamberg, ☎ 0951-56-002, fax 0951-55-211.

Camping

Campingplatz Insel is on the banks of the Regnitz. It has 170 lots, with good facilities, and is open year-round. Am Campingplatz 1, 96049 Bamberg-Bug, ☎ 0951-56-320, fax 0951-56-321, www.campinginsel.de.

Coburger Land

Archeological evidence suggests human settlements in Coburg about 1,000 BC but it entered written history during the time of Charlemagne. The first mention of a fortress at Coburg dates to 1056.

Like so many other territories in central Germany, Coburg has a complex and confusing history. Ownership and the exact composition of the land changed frequently. The German custom of dividing property and land among all sons meant that states were frequently divided, or occasionally reunited if separate branches of ruling families died out.

In 1353, Coburg came under the control of the powerful Wettiner family, who ruled Saxony from 1089 to 1918. Coburg became their toehold, so to speak, in Franken and was showered with privileges and financial investments to show off the power of Saxony. In 1586, Coburg for the first time became a ducal residence and capital of the newly formed Duchy of Saxe-Coburg-Eisenach. For the next 250 years, Coburg was mostly poor and in political flux as it became the subject of several succession struggles.

During the 19th century, things improved dramatically. The ducal family, by now known as Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha (in English usually Saxe-Coburg-Gotha), managed to marry into the royal houses of Britain, Portugal, Belgium, Russia, Bulgaria, Denmark, and Sweden. The marriage of Princess Victoire of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld with the duke of Kent, which produced Queen Victoria of Great Britain and Ireland, initially seemed like a major coup. However, it was superseded by the marriage between the second son of Duke Ernest I, Albert, and his cousin Queen Victoria in 1840. Queen Victoria was still of the House of Hanover, but when her son ascended the throne in 1901 as Edward VII, a Saxe-Coburg was finally on the British throne. It did not last long though – in 1917, his successor King George V dropped the German surname in favor of Windsor to blur the rather obvious link to Britain's World War I enemy. Queen Victoria visited Coburg seven times, even after the early death of Prince Albert in 1861.

Like other royals in Germany, the dukes of Saxe-Coburg abdicated at the end of the First World War. Most other small Saxon duchies joined to form the Free State of Thuringia. In a 1920 plebiscite, Saxe-Coburg instead voted to join Bavaria for two reasons: Thuringia was too socialist for local conservative tastes and Bavaria's strong agricultural sector would ensure a food supply that was a major concern after the war. In a brilliant move, the document of accession required the state of Bavaria to maintain the cultural collections, library, and theater of Coburg in perpetuity – even now Coburg insists on enforcing this obligation.

Coburg's decision to join Bavaria was fortuitous as it saved the region from coming under Communist rule after World War II. However, since reunification in 1990, Coburg has again been at the center of Germany and experienced an economic boom.

Coburg

Information Sources

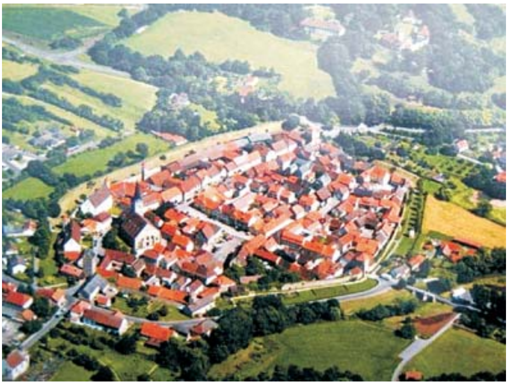
Tourismus & Congress Service Coburg, Herrngasse 4, 96450 Coburg, ☎ 09561-741-80, fax 09561-741-829, www.coburg-tourist.de.

Getting Around

Coburg can be reached by direct **trains** from Bamberg every two hours in 42 minutes. More frequent connections are available but require transfers to a train or bus in Lichtenfels. These take around 50 minutes. The station is five minutes northeast of the Old Town – follow Loussau Straße and turn left into Judengasse.

All the nearby sights can be reached by bus or train from Coburg but double-check the return times, especially on weekends when the services are sometimes limited.

SEßLACH – ROTHENBURG IN MINIATURE



If driving to Coburg from Bamberg, it is worth turning off the B4 to take a slight detour through Seßlach. This medieval town, with a history dating back to the time of Charlemagne, is completely encircled by its 780-m/850-yard town wall. It is like a small Rothenburg ob der Tauber (see *Mittelfranken*) but without the throngs of tourists. The town of just over 4,000 inhabitants has no specific sights other than the beautifully preserved medieval town itself. Simply stroll through the narrow alleys and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere that you will never experience in Rothenburg. Tourist information is available from **Stadt Seßlach**, Marktplatz 98, 96145 Seßlach, ☎ 09569-92-250, fax 09569-922-540, www.sesslach.de. In the heart of Seßlach, in a huge Gothic half-timbered building, is **Gasthaus Reinwand** (€), Maximiliansplatz 99, ☎ 09569-304. The price of the self-brewed beer here undercuts supermarket prices. The food is simple, typical rural German tavern cuisine.

Sightseeing

Stadthaus *(Störfix)*

In contrast to many Franconian towns, half-timbered buildings do not dominate the Old Town of Coburg. The town experienced a golden age as ducal residence during the Renaissance and early Baroque as well as during the 19th century when Historicism was in favor .

The main sight in Coburg is the mighty fortress Veste Coburg, but a stroll through the Old Town is also rewarding. Seeing the exterior of the sights described below, followed by a stroll to the castle, should take around 90 minutes.

COMBINATION TICKETS

The tourism office sells the **COcard** for €9.50. It allows the use of Coburg buses for three days as well as entry into seven museums: Veste Coburg, Naturkundemuseum, Grabungsmuseum, Ehrenburg, Modern Glass Museum, Schloss Tambach Museum, and Schloss Callenberg. However, many visitors, especially if not using buses, may find the €7 **Kombikarte** for Veste Coburg, Schloss Ehrenburg, Schloss Rosenau, and the Modern Glass Museum Rosenau a better value. In the unlikely event that you don't go to Veste Coburg, Schloss Ehrenburg and Schloss Rosenau can be seen for €6.

Old Town

Markt Area

The large **Markt** (Market Square) is at the heart of the Old Town. The statue of Prince Albert in the center of the square was paid for and unveiled by his widow, Queen Victoria of Great Britain. On the northern side is the Renaissance **Stadthaus** (City House), erected by Duke Casimir in 1601. The **Rathaus** (Town Hall) on the southern side is from the same period but received a Rococo makeover during the 18th century. Note the Bratwurstmännle on the gable – he is actually St Mauritius, the town's patron saint.

The **Münzmeisterhaus**, Ketchengasse 7, is one of the oldest half-timbered buildings in Germany. It may be up to a century older than the indicated 1333. The nearby **Steinerne Kemenate** (Stone House), Neugasse 1, is the oldest house in Coburg and dates from the 12th century. Around the corner is the Renaissance **Casimirianum**, a school erected by Duke Casimir. It is not open to the public.

The Rathaus *(Störfix)*

Casimirianum *(Tobias Knerr)*

Across the road is the 14th-century Gothic **Stadtkirche St Moriz** (Parish Church), Pfarrgasse 7, ☎ 09561-871426, www.morizkirche-coburg.de. The western portal and twin towers are a century later, although the second tower never made it to its intended height. The interior received a Baroque makeover during the 18th century and contains the graves of the dukes of Saxe-Coburg. The church is open weekdays from 8 am to 6 pm, Saturday from 10 am to 6 pm, and Sunday after the 10 am service until 6 pm. It closes in winter at dusk.

Stadtkirche St Moriz *(Presse03)*

■ Schlossplatz Area

The **Landesbibliothek** (State Library), Schlossplatz 1, ☎ 09561- 85380, is in a building to the rear of the Schloss, away from the square. It has a collection of 400,000 volumes from the 15th century to the present and is worth peeking in to see the Late Baroque and Classical public halls. Opening hours are Monday to Saturday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 1 pm on Friday and Saturday. Admission is free.

COBURGER SAUSAGES

Coburg is famous for its grilled sausages – longer but thinner than Franconian or Thuringian sausages. According to legend, the staff of the Bratwurstmännle on the gable of the Rathaus determines the length of each Bratwurst. It was long believed to be between 35 and 40 cm/13.8 and 15.75 inches but an official measurement by the local fire brigade in 1982 revealed a disappointingly short 31 cm/12 inches. Coburg sausages have a distinct taste, in part because they are grilled over pinecones rather than charcoal. Adding mustard is considered bad form. Authentic samples can be had from stalls on the Markt or any restaurant serving local cuisine.

Next to the palace is Germany's largest doll museum, the **Coburger Puppenmuseum**, Rückerstraße 2-3, ☎ 09561-74047, www.coburger-puppenmuseum.de. On display are 900 dolls, 100 dolls' china sets, 50 dolls' houses, and 320 tea cozies made with doll heads on top. The dolls date from 1800 to 1956. Opening hours are from April to October daily 9 am to 5 pm and November to March Tuesday to Sunday at 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

Schloss Ehrenburg (Presse03)

The dominant building on the huge **Schlossplatz** (Palace Square) is **Schloss Ehrenburg** (Palace), www.sgvcoburg.de. The palace served as principal residence of the dukes from 1547. The original Renaissance building was largely changed into a Baroque palace after major fire damage in 1690. The current neo-Gothic sandstone façade was added during the 19th century to designs of the talented Berlin architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel.

Honor Palace: According to legend, the palace was named Ehrenburg (Honor Palace) by Emperor Karl V, since it was built without enforced labor – highly unusual for the period.

The interior is a mixture of Baroque and French Empire styles. The most impressive room is the **Riesensaal** (Hall of the Giants), where 28 giant columns in the shape of men bear the weight of the stucco ceiling, with 56 coats-of-arms of territories controlled by the House of Wettin. The **Hofkirche** (Court Church) has for a Lutheran church a surprisingly sumptuous Baroque interior. The **Thronsaal** (Throne Room) is based on Napoleon's in Paris. The flushing toilet, installed for a visit by British Queen Victoria, was possibly the first of its kind on continental Europe. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, April to September from 9 am to 5 pm and October to March from 10 am to 3 pm. Compulsory guided tours start at least every hour. Admission is €4.

Coburg has a theater tradition dating back to the 16th century. The classical **Landestheater** (State Theater), previously Hoftheater (Court Theater), Schlossplatz 6, ☎ 09561-89890, www.landestheater-coburg.de, opened in 1840 with 550 seats at a time when the town had only 8,000 inhabitants. Today, it is one of the most successful in Germany and has pleasantly low prices – see *Cultural Events*.

The **Spitaltor**, just behind the Landestheater, is at 21 m/69 ft the highest and most impressive of the three surviving town gates.

In the Hofgarten, on the way to the fortress, is the **Naturkunde-Museum Coburg** (Natural History Museum), Park 6, ☎ 09561-80-810, www.naturkunde-museum-coburg.de. It is one of the most important collections of its kind in Germany and features exhibitions on history of the earth, evolution, and the history of man. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 5 pm; closing at 8 pm on Wednesday from April to September. Admission is €1.50 but free on Friday after 1 pm and Saturday before 1 pm.

■ Veste Coburg

The main sight in town is the Veste Coburg (Fortress). It is high on a hill, 167 m/550 ft higher than the town, and can be seen from afar. It is a mighty fortress with triple rows of protection walls – the outer wall is 700 m/2,300 ft long, almost as long as the wall encircling the nearby medieval town of Seßlach. The oldest reference to the fortress is 1056, but the oldest surviving part is the Blauer Turm (Blue Tower) from around 1230. Most of the other structures were erected after a devastating fire in 1499. The dukes moved into town in the early 16th century but the defenses were maintained up to the late 17th century.

Veste Coburg *(Presse03)*

The fortress was taken by military force only once (in 1451). During the Thirty Years' War, a three-year siege by 8,000 imperial troops led by the feared Wallenstein was unsuccessful against only 800 defenders. The castle fell into disrepair but during the 19th century was partly restored in a Historicist style. During the early 20th century, much of this work was undone with a more historically correct restoration. Veste Coburg is considered one of the best-preserved medieval fortresses in Germany.

Once past all the defenses, the castle has two courtyards. To the right is the half-timbered **Fürstenbau**, until the 1970s a residence of the Saxe-Coburg family. It is currently closed for restoration work.

The **Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg** (Art Collection), ☎ 09561-8790, www.kunstsammlungen-coburg.de, is spread over three buildings around the courtyard to the left of the entrance. The first building is the **Steinerne Kemenate** (the German name refers to the fact that this stone building could be heated). This building contains the wood-paneled **Lutherstube**, where Martin Luther spent six months while the Imperial Diet debated religious issues. Being under an imperial banning order, he frustratingly could not attend the diet in Augsburg in person but furiously corresponded with delegates on an almost daily basis. The Luther painting here is from the workshop of Lucas Cranach. On the same floor is the **Grosse Hofstube** (Great

Court Chamber), virtually unaltered since 1504. Several suits of armor and harnesses are on display. One floor up is the magnificent **Jagd-Intarsienzimmer** (Hunting Room) with one of the best examples of Renaissance marquetry in Germany. It was originally installed in Schloss Ehrenburg in 1632 but moved here during the 19th century. It has 60 panels of inlaid colored woods with hunting themes. The small but excellent **Schäfer Art Collection** includes works by Albrecht Dürer, Matthias Grünewald, Hans Holbein, and Lucas Cranach.

Veste Coburg

In the adjacent **Carl-Eduard-Building** is a collection of Venetian glass and the impressive **Kupferstichkabinett** (Graphics Collection). Only a minute number of the 330,000 prints by 5,000 European artists are on display – more can be seen on prior request.

The **Herzoginbau** (Duchess Building) on the western side of the courtyard has an eclectic collection, including hunting weapons, armor, torture implements, as well as coaches and carousels. It includes the world's oldest royal coach in working condition (1560).

Opening hours are daily from April to October 10 am to 5 pm; from November to March, Tuesday to Sunday 1 to 4 pm only. Admission is €3.30 – the Hofgarten and some courtyards are free. (See also combination tickets above.)

The Veste is a 30-minutes stroll from the Old Town through the very pleasant Hofgarten (Court Gardens). The final assault on the castle is rather steep.

From April to November, the **Veste Express** motorized train departs from Herrngasse (between Markt and Schlossplatz) to the castle every half-hour between 9:45 am and 4:45 pm.

Farther Afield

■ Rödental

Schloss Rosenau

Schloss Rosenau, ☎ 09563-308410, www.sgvcoburg.de, is a medieval building that received a neo-Gothic makeover in the early 19th century after the palace was acquired by Duke Ernst I von Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld. The duke's instructions to the architect, once again Karl Friedrich Schinkel, were simple: he wanted a summerhouse with princely glamor but with rural simplicity. Ernst's second son, Prince Albert, was born here and visited various times with his wife Queen Victoria of Great Britain, who said of Rosenau "…if I was not who I am – this would have been my real home." On view are the three-aisle Marble Hall, the royal apartments, and the original Viennese Biedermeier furniture. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, from April to September 9 am to 5 pm and from October to March at 10 am to 3 pm. Compulsory guided tours start at least every full hour. Admission is €4.

The palace is beautifully located in a large English landscaped park (free). Inside the park, in the **Orangery**, is the **Museum für Modernes Glas** (Modern Glass Museum), ☎ 09563-1606. It has about 300 works on display from 1950 to the present. Opening hours are April to October, daily from 10 am to 1 pm and 1:30 to 5 pm; November to March from Tuesday to Sunday 1 to 4 pm only. Admission is €1 or free with a Veste Coburg ticket.

Since 1935, **W. Goebel Porzellanfabrik**, Coburger Straße 7, 96472 Rödental, ☎ 09563-920-303, www.goebel.de, has been producing the famous small, cute, hand-painted **MI Hummel** porcelain figures. The Information Center with

Hummel figurine

museum and Factory Outlet are open weekdays 9 am to 5 pm and Saturday 9 am to noon. Factory tours (€4) are usually on Tuesday at 10 am and Wednesday at 1 pm.

Rödental is seven km/4.3 miles from Coburg and easily reached by hourly trains in seven minutes or twice hourly by Bus Line 8311 and 8312 or Stadtbus 3. (From May to October, this bus occasionally stops at the Schloss itself.) From Bahnhof Oeslou, it is about two km/1.2 miles to the Schloss. Follow Coburger Straße and turn right into Rosenau. It is also a pleasant and easy cycle from Coburg.

Neustadt bei Coburg

Neustadt bei Coburg is a modern industrial town a few miles from the border with Thuringia. It can be reached by at least hourly trains from Coburg in less than 20 minutes.

The town is famous for its doll-making industry and a highlight is the **Museum der Deutschen Spielzeugindustrie** (German Toy Industry Museum), Hindenburgplatz 1, ☎ 09568-5600, www.spielzeugmuseum-neustadt.de. It has a wide range of historic toys on display as well as about 800 dolls dressed in traditional costumes from 100 countries. It also illustrates the process of making toys – a century ago, 16 different occupations were involved in producing a doll. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €3.

An interesting small museum deals with the division of Germany from 1945 to 1989. The **Informationsstelle über die Teilung Deutschlands** (Information Bureau on the Partitioning of Germany), Schützenplatz 1, ☎ 09568-81126, has information, photos, and scale models on the division of Germany as well as the elaborate East German border patrol system. Opening hours are limited to Wednesday, weekends, and vacation days from 2 to 4 pm. Admission is free to individual travelers.

Cultural Events

When Coburg joined Bavaria in 1920, it managed to contractually bind the state of Bavaria to maintain in perpetuity the cultural treasures and traditions of Coburg. As a result, the **Landestheater** is paid for by Bavaria and is the only National Theater outside Munich. The quality and quantity of its program exceeds anything that a small town could afford on its own. Around 300 annual performances are staged in its two theaters – the Grosse Halle (large hall) and the nearby Reittheater (the former riding hall). The program includes opera, operetta, modern musicals, symphony concerts, ballet, and plays. Prices for standard performances range from €4 to €20, which probably helps to explain how this theater sells on average 84% of available seats – the highest occupancy ratio in Germany. Reservations are possible at ☎ 09561-898-989, or online at www.landestheater-coburg.de.

Festivals

Coburg Samba Festival *(Abtrix)*

Despite Coburg's somewhat formal appearance, the inhabitants know how to let their hair hang loose. Annually in early July, the town stages Europe's largest **Samba Festival**, www.samba-festival.de. Some 200,000 visitors stream to the festival over three days.

The **Schlossplatzfest** is held annually over five days at the end of July. It is a huge open-air festival with live music and is famous for the wide variety of food on offer.

Every three years (2009, 2012, etc), Coburg stages a **Johan Strauss Festival** with about 15 separate events during the second part of June.

JOHANN STRAUSS IN COBURG

The Viennese composer Johann Strauss (1825-99) had an unhappy second marriage but Austrian law prohibited him from divorcing. In 1886, after converting to Lutheranism and formally resigning his Austrian citizenship, he became a citizen of the more enlightened Duchy of Sachsen-Coburg und Gotha. A divorce was granted and a year later, he married Adele Strauß. He remained a citizen of Coburg, although he spent most of the rest of his live in Vienna.

Adventures

On Foot

Town Walks

The **Coburg tourist office** conducts guided town walks at 10:30 daily from April to October, but from November to March only on Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday.

Jogging

It is thanks to the House of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha that the standard modern marathon is 42.195 km/26.219 miles. The length of the marathon was determined at the London Olympic Games in 1908 when King Edward VII of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha insisted that the race, which started at Windsor Castle, should end right in front of the royal box at White City Stadium. To commemorate this event, Coburg initiated Germany's first permanently marked marathon course, www.coburg-marathon.de. It starts from the multipurpose hall in Lützelbuch and passes by several sights. The toughest stretch is also the most interesting – from 28 to 32 km/17.4 to 20 miles passing the Veste Coburg.

On Wheels

By Bicycle

The **Tour der Fachwerkromantik** (Romantic Half-Timbered Route) is a circular route of just over 30 km/18.6 miles, passing through some of the romantic towns with half-timbered building in the region. From Coburg it goes through Ahorn and Seßlach before returning via Tambach.

Bicycles can be rented in **Coburg** from **Bike Mike**, Ketschendorfer Straße 82-84, ☎ 09561-55220; in **Rödental** from **Rathaus Rödental**, Bürgerplatz 1, ☎ 09563-960; and in **Neustadt bei Coburg** from **Zweirad-Spezialist Ludwig Martin**, Wittgenstraße 8, ☎ 09568-94090.

Wildlife

Wildpark Schloss Tambach

Just south of Coburg, is **Wildpark Schloss Tambach**, Schlossallee 3, 96479 Tambach, ☎ 09567-9229-150, www.wildpark-tambach.de, with a wildlife park, falconry, and museum. Around 200 animals from 20 species roam freely in the park. The falconry, with eagles and falcons, has flight demonstrations daily from March to October at 11 am and 3 pm. Inside the Schloss, which was designed by Leonhard Dientzenhofer, is the **Jagd- und Fischereimuseum** (Hunting & Fishing Museum), ☎ 09567-1816, www.museum-tambach.de. It is a branch of the similarly named museum in Munich and has about 600 items on display, ranging from stuffed animals to hunting instruments and a small aquarium where children may feed the fish. The park is open every day of the year from 8 am to 6 pm. The museum is open daily from March to October 10 am to 5 pm, but open only on Sunday from November to February. Admission to the whole complex is €6.50. The museum can also be seen separately for €2.50.

Where to Stay & Eat

See pages 50 and 52 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

Romantik Hotel Goldene Traube

Romantik Hotel Goldene Traube is the top choice in Coburg. It is conveniently located just off the Markt at the edge of the Old Town and has a gastronomical tradition reaching back over three centuries. The rooms are comfortable and individually furnished. The stylish **Meer & Mehr** (€€-€€€) (Sea & More) specializes in fish but has a number of meat dishes too. The more rustic **Weinstüblä** (€-€€) serves mostly local food. Am Viktoriabrunnen 2, 96450 Coburg, ☎ 09561-8760, fax 09561-876-222, www.goldenetraube.com. (€€€)

The **Best Western Blankenburg** is north of the Old Town. It is a modern hotel with comfortable rooms. Guests have free entry to the adjacent swimming pool complex. The gourmet **Kräutergarten** (€€-€€€) is considered the best in Coburg and serves mostly local cuisine but with a light touch. Rosenauer Straße 30, 96450 Coburg, ☎ 09561-6440, fax 09561-644-199, www.blankenburg.bestwestern.de. (€€-€€€)

The modern **Ringhotel Stadt Coburg** is conveniently located across the road from the Hauptbahnhof. It has nice, well-equipped rooms – the majority non-smoking. The wood-paneled **Backstüble** (€-€€) serves mostly regional cuisine. Bicycles are available to hotel guests for free. Lossaustraße 12, 96450 Coburg, ☎ 09561-8740, fax 09561-874-222, www.hotel-stadt-Coburg.de. (€€)

A pleasant alternative to sleeping in Coburg itself is the romantic **Hotel Schloss Hohenstein** in Ahorn, about 10 km/6.2 miles south of Coburg. This 16th-century Schloss has been converted into a hotel and has 13 individually styled rooms. The upmarket **restaurant** (€€€) has a vast selection of local and international wines. A terrace café and a rustic Weinstube offer lighter dishes. Hohenstein 1, 96482 Ahorn, ☎ 09565-949-40, fax 09565-949-460, www.schloss-hohenstein.de. (€€-€€€)

Schloss Hohenstein
lädt zum Verweilen ein.

Hotel Schloss Hohenstein

Künstler-Klause (€-€€€), Theaterplatz 4a, ☎ 09561-90705, serves local cuisine in a variety of small, dark wood-paneled rooms. It is open only for dinner and reservations are generally essential.

The **Ratskeller** (€-€€), Markt 1, ☎ 09561-92400, is in the vaults of the Rathaus on the market square. It serves local specialties in a historic setting.

The **Bratwurstglöckle** (€-€€), Kleine Johannisgasse 5, ☎ 09561-75270, is between the Markt and Schlossplatz and a good place for Coburger sausages or other local specialties.

Nearby is the **Münchner Hofbräu** (€-€€), Kleine Johannisgasse 8, ☎ 09561-234-923, which belongs to the similarly named establishment in Munich. In addition to beer, it serves fish and local dishes.

The **Burgschänke** (€-€€), Veste Coburg 1a, ☎ 09561-80980, is a pleasant tavern in an early 20th-century building at the entrance to Veste Coburg. It has a simple menu of local specialties.

Youth Hostels

The **DJH Youth Hostel** is in the neo-Gothic castle of Schloss Ketschendorf about 20 minutes walk south of the Old Town. From the station, it can be reached on Bus 1, 11, 8306, or 8319 (stop Ketschendorf-JH). The hostel is closed in December and January. Parkstraße 2, 96450 Coburg, ☎ 09561-15330, fax 09561-28653.

Camping

The closest campsite to Coburg is **Campingplatz Sonnland**, Am Hattersdorfer Weg, Seßlach, ☎ 09569-220-541, fax 09569-1593. It is just outside the town and has 100 lots.

Frankenwald

The nature park Frankenwald (Franconian Forest) is known as the green crown of Bavaria. It is a 100,000-ha/250,000-acre park with some of the thickest forests in Germany. The area is part of the German Mittelgebirge with elevations up to 800 m/2,624 ft. The forest is a haven for outdoor activities, with hiking (3,500 km/2,175 miles of marked trails) and cycling particularly popular. The park has some of the best and most challenging mountain biking trails in the country. On the edge of the park are the historic towns of Kronach and Kulmbach. Both have magnificent castles and are famous for their good and plentiful beer.

Tourist Office

Frankenwald Tourismus, Adolf-Kolping-Straße 1, 96317 Kronach, ☎ 09261-60150, fax 09261-6015-15, www.frankenwald-tourismus.de.

Getting Around

Railways

The Frankenwald is easily reached by rail from other parts of Bavaria – transfers are usually required in Lichtenfels to local trains. From Lichtenfels at least hourly trains run to Kronach (15 to 25 minutes) and Kulmbach (20 minutes). Although Kronach is only 33 km/20 miles by car from Coburg, it is usually necessary to travel via Licthenfels when using public transport.

The Frankenwald has an excellent public transportation system, making non-circular hiking and cycling routes good options. Virtually all destinations can be reached by either rail or bus. From Kronach to Kulmbach, it is worth catching the direct train (every two hours), which takes 40 minutes, rather than ones requiring transfers (80 minutes).

Road

Traveling by car certainly is the easiest and fastest way to get around in the region. By car, it is only 33 km/20 miles from Coburg to Kronach and a further 23 km/14 miles to Kulmbach. Kulmbach can be reached in less than 30 minutes from Bayreuth and in around an hour from Bamberg.

Kronach

Kronach is a lovely small town of 18,000 with a historical town center and a largely preserved town wall. The Rosenberg fortress that towers over the city is one of the largest in Germany and has never been taken in war. Kronach receives far fewer tourists than it should, which is a shame for the local economy but a boon for visitors, who can enjoy the narrow streets and atmosphere largely in peace.

Kronach celebrated its millennium in 2003 – its first mention was in a document ordering its destruction to prevent it from falling into the hands of King Heinrich II, a sworn enemy of anti-king Heinrich von Schweinfurt. Since then, Kronach has been more successful in war. From 1122 to 1802, the town belonged to the bishop of Bamberg, who encircled the Old Town with thick walls. The walls successfully protected it against attacks by the Hussiten (1430) and in the Margrave Wars (1553) that saw nearby Kulmbach destroyed. During the Thirty Years' War, 20,000 Swedish troops attacked the town three times but the wall and 2,000 defenders where sufficient to beat them off. Even during the Seven Years' War, the walls remained standing, despite artillery attacks by the Prussians in 1759.

Tourist Office

Tourismus, Markt 5, 96317 Kronach, ☎ 09261-97242, www.kronach.de.

Old Town

Kronach's Old Town, here known as the **Obere Stadt**, is between the Kronach and Haßlach streams. Kronach's town walls are still largely intact and several watchtowers survive to provide a romantic city panorama.

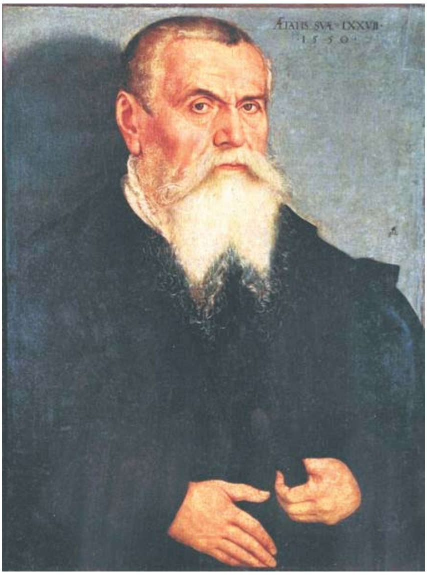
The best part of visiting Kronach is simply strolling through the narrow old streets. The **Kirche St Johannes der Täufer** (Church St John the Baptist), at the

Kronach *(Stefan Wicklein)*

southern point of the walled city, is part-Gothic, part-Renaissance. The lower parts of the towers date to the 14th century, while most of the church itself is 15th-century. The lovely western portal was begun around 1510 but only completed a century later. Some of the art is 16th-century, with neo-Gothic additions from the 19th century complemented by late 20th-century stained glass and sculptures.

Before strolling along Lucas Cranach Straße toward the Markt, note the **Bamberger Tor** (Bamberg Gate) to the left. It dates from the 14th century but the half-timbered upper structure is 16th-century, and is the only city gate to have survived to the present.

LUCAS CRANACH (1472-1553)



Kronach's most famous son is the Renaissance painter Lucas Cranach. He left his small birth town as a young man and was educated in Nürnberg, Passau, Regensburg, and Linz. The latter half of his life he spent in Saxony-Wittenberg. Here he was friends with Martin Luther and became the most famous painter of the Lutheran Reformation by painting its leaders and providing paintings for many new Lutheran churches.

In the former German Democratic Republic, Cranach was long out of favor. He was clearly an early capitalist: he ran his workshop according to strict business principles and became rich quickly. In Wittenberg, in addition to his art business, he acquired a pharmacy, a bookshop, a book publishing business, and served for decades as town councilor and even mayor.

There is nothing of Kronach in any of Cranach's paintings but his surname is the town name, as it was known in the 16th century. Up until 1983, there was nothing of Cranach's work in Kronach either but since then five originals have gone on display in the Fortress Rosenberg.

The **Historisches Rathaus** (Historical Town Hall) dates from 1583 and has a beautiful Renaissance façade. Note the Banqueting Hall and the former covered market inside. In the **Neues Rathaus** (New Town Hall), erected in the 1970s, is a reconstruction of the former sentries walk from the town walls.

Festung Rosenberg

Festung Rosenberg *(Stefan Wicklein)*

The main attraction in Kronach is the **Festung Rosenberg** (Fortress), ☎ 09261-60410, www.festung-kronach.de, which towers over the city. It is one of the largest and best-preserved fortresses in Germany.

Rosenberg was first mentioned in 1249 and since then has never been captured in war – the up to 25-m/82-ft-high ramparts are formidable. During the 14th century, the existing castle was converted into a stronghold of the bishops of Bamberg. Following the Thirty Years' War, the fortress was enhanced and received its five-pointed star bastions. The defenses were maintained up to 1867. During the First World War, it served as a prisoner-of-war jail, with Charles de Gaul the best-known inmate. (Due to frequent escape attempts, de Gaul also spent jail time in Ingolstadt and Weißenburg.) At the end of World War II airplane engines were assembled here.

The fortress was restored during the late 20th century and now houses a number of museums, as well as the local youth hostel. The **Fränkische Galerie** (Franconian Gallery) is a branch of the Bavarian National Museum and has an excellent collection of Gothic and Renaissance art. The main emphasis is on Franconian artists, with works by Lucas Cranach, Hans von Kulmbach, Veit Stoß, and Tilman Riemenschneider. Further collections include an exhibition on the construction of the fortress as well as temporary exhibitions of mostly modern art. The Frankenwald Museum deals with local history but is under reconstruction. Opening hours for the fortress and Fränkische Galerie are April to October from Tuesday to Sunday 9:30 am to 5:30 pm. From November to March, the Fränkische Galerie is closed but the fortress can be seen on guided tours from Tuesday to Sunday at 11 am and 2 pm. Admission is €3.50 to the whole complex, or €2.50 for the gallery only.

Mitwitz

The **Wasserschloss Mitwitz**, Unteres Schloß 5, 96268 Mitwitz, ☎ 09266-1876, is a Renaissance castle with a water-filled moat in the small town of Mitwitz, 10 km/six miles west of Kronach or 20 km/12 miles east of Coburg. Although it has a history dating back to at least 1266, most of the present structure was erected around 1600. It is only open for guided tours from May to September on Saturday at 2:30 pm and on Sunday at 11 am and 2 pm. Admission is €2.

Kulmbach

Kulmbach is a modern town of 30,000. It is famous for its breweries, while the magnificent Renaissance castle of Plassenburg is the most popular sight. The town is at the confluence of the Weißer (White) and Roter (Red) Main and an ideal starting point for outdoor adventures in the Frankenwald.

The first reference to Kulmbach is from a document in 1035 but the area has been settled since the time of Charlemagne. From 1340, Kulmbach was under the control of the Hohenzollern family, most famous as kings of Prussia and later German emperors.

The worst day in the history of Kulmbach was **Conraditag** – November 26, 1553. On this day, Kulmbach was completely destroyed as punishment for Margrave Albrecht Alcibiades. He attempted to use the religious divisions in Germany to unite all Franken under his rule. For two years, he made war and plundered through the region but only succeeded in uniting against him the forces of the Catholic bishoprics of Bamberg and Würzburg, along with Protestant Nürnberg. Once defeated, his city of Kulmbach was burned to the ground, wells poisoned, and the Plassenburg destroyed. The city was only allowed to rebuild after huge war reparations were paid. As a result, Kulmbach is more modern and the Old Town less interesting than, say, Kronach. However, the new Plassenburg is a Renaissance masterpiece and worth a detour. Nevertheless, the margrave moved his residence to Bayreuth soon after and Kulmbach lost out on the splendor usually associated with Baroque residential cities. After a brief spell as a Prussian province, Kulmbach became part of Bavaria in 1810.

Kulmbach has a long **beer brewing tradition** and is often described as the secret capital of beer. Annually, 45 million gallons are brewed in Kulmbach, over 9,000 pints per inhabitant, consisting of 20 different beers. The most popular local beer is the pilsner Kulmbacher

Edelherb. EKU28 has an alcohol content of 11%, making it one of the strongest regularly produced beers in the world.

Tourist Office

Tourismus & Veranstaltungsservice, Sutte 2, 95326 Kulmbach, ☎ 09221-95-880, www.kulmbach.de.

Old Town

The sights in the Old Town, known here as the **Oberes Stadt** (Upper City), are fairly low key – if time is limited head straight uphill to the Plassenburg.

Kulmbach and Plassenburg Castle

Although the city walls were destroyed, several watch towers survived. The five-story **Roter Turm** (Red Tower) with its impressive half-timbered upper floors is in essence from the 13th century. The nearby **Amtshof des Klosers Langheim**, a Baroque building with a high-gabled façade, was designed by Leonhard Dientzenhofer. The **St Petrikirche** is a Late Gothic hall church that was rebuilt in 1559 following the destruction on Conraditag. Its interior is 19th-century neo-Gothic.

The **Markt** is dominated by the 1752 **Rathaus** (Town Hall). It has a Rococo façade and unusual gable with statues of Prudentia and Justitia. The 1898 **Luitpold fountain** was put in storage during World War II and restored to the market square only in 1994.

About two km/1.2 miles north of the Old Town, in the former Mönchshof brewery, is the **Bayerisches Brauereimuseum** (Bavarian Breweries Museum), Mönchshof, Hofer Straße 20, ☎ 09221-80514, www.bayerisches-brauereimuseum.de. Displays explain the history of beer culture and include a 3,000-year-old beer amphora, medieval brewing techniques, and a typical brewery from around 1900. Beer is usually brewed on Wednesday. The free sample is small but a beer garden and restaurant are available on the premises (see *Where to Eat*). Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, opening at 9 am on weekend from May to October. Admission is €4.

Plassenburg

Plassenburg Castle

The **Plassenburg Castle** has been in existence since at least 1135. It was largely destroyed in 1554 but rebuilt by Caspar Vischer as one of the most important Renaissance edifices in Germany. From the outside, little hints at the beauty of the two courtyards. The western façade of the **Schöne Hof** (Beautiful Courtyard) has two upper floors with eight arcades each. The courtyards are frequently used for concerts – see *Cultural Events*.

A compulsory guided tour of the **Staatliche Museen Plassenburg** (National Museum), ☎ 09221-82-200, includes the apartments with period furniture as used by the margraves before they moved to Bayreuth and again when they fled here during the Thirty Years' War. The **Schlosskapelle** (Court Chapel) is one of the earliest Protestant chapels in Germany. After the tour, the **Armeemuseum Friedrich der Große** (Army Museum of Frederick the Great), ☎ 09221-82-200, can be seen at leisure. It explains the rise of the Prussian Army during the 18th century and is the largest collection of Prussian military memorabilia of the period. On display are mostly uniforms, weapons, and contemporary paintings.

The **Deutsches Zinnfigurenmuseum** (German Tin Figures Museum), ☎ 09221-804-571, has the largest tin figure collection in the world. Over 300,000 figures are arranged in 150 dioramas illustrating life from the Stone Age to the battles of the Napoleonic wars. The *Conraditag 1553* is, with 19,300 figures, the largest single diorama in the world. From May to October, on Thursday, Saturday, and Sunday, between 2 and 4 pm, demonstrations are held of tin figure production.

The **Landschaftsmuseum Obermain** (Upper Main Regional Museum) is a fine local history museum with an eclectic but interesting collection. The main emphasis is on early history and the period of the margraves. Of special interest is the 19th-century copy of the Ebstorfer World Map – the largest medieval map of the world. (The original early 13th-century map was lost.) The museum also has the usual collection of paintings, furniture, and religious objects but of particular interest is the **Pörbitscher Schatz** (Treasure). During the Thirty Years' War, the obviously rich Family Gutteter had buried their vast collection of gold and silver but they clearly did not survive and their treasure was only rediscovered almost three centuries later.

VISITORS INFORMATION

The entrance to the castle is 116 m/380 ft higher than the Old Town and the road up the hill has inclines of up to 25%. An easier option is the Plassenburg Express: it departs every half-hour from the Zentralparkplatz.

There are three museums in the Burg: The Staatlice Sammlungen (State Collections), Deutsches Zinnfigurenmuseum (German Tin Figures Museum), and the Landschaftsmuseum Obermain (Upper Main Regional Museum). Admission to each is €4, or €10 for all three. The Staatliche Sammlungen includes a guided tour of the palace rooms and chapel as well as admission to the Army Museum. All museums are open daily from April to October 9 am to 6 pm and from November to March 10 am to 4 pm.

Cultural Events

The **Plassenburg** in Kulmbach is a popular venue for events of all kinds, ranging from classical music to theater and modern musicals. The larger events are held outside in the courtyards while smaller concerts are staged in the historical halls. The best-known concert series is the **Open Airs**, with a range of concerts from classical to modern music held May to August. Tickets are available through the tourist office or www.ticketonline.de.

The tourist office in Kronach arranges the annual **Faust Festpiele** (Faust Festival), www.faust-festspiele.de, with performances from June to August in the courtyard of the **Festung Rosenberg**. It is the only theater in Germany to perform Goethe's *Faust I* and *II* every year. Other plays are also staged.

Festivals

The **Kulmbacher Bierfest** (beer festival) is a major event with ample opportunities to sample local drink and food. The festival held end

July, early August, is also accompanied by cultural events and entertainment.

Thurnau is a small town near Kulmbach and is famous for its pottery industry that goes back to the 13th century. Four times per year, local craftsmen and artists sell their wares at the **Töpfermarkt Thurnau** held in the heart of the Old Town.

Shopping

Rosenthal porcelain

The famous German **porcelain and flatware** producer, Rosenthal, has a factory outlet store in Kronach. At **Rosenthal Porzellan**, Industriestraße 48, Kronach, ☎ 09261-629111, www.rosenthal.de, prices are discounted 30-50%.

Tin figures and related books can be bought in the shop at the Zinnfigurenmuseum in the Plassenburg. However, collectors and traders from all over the world meet to sell and exchange items at the **Deutsche Zinnfigurenbörse** (German Tin Figure Exchange) organized by the museum in Kulmbach on the second weekend of August in uneven years.

Adventures

On Foot

Town Walks

In **Kronach**, the tourist office conducts guided town walks from May to September on Thursday and Saturday at 10:30 am. The **Kronach Mauerweg** (Wall Route) leads from the fortress along the town walls and through the Old Town. It is 1.7 km/a mile long with explanations en route on the construction of the wall as well as fauna and flora found in the vicinity.

Countryside Hikes

On most weekends, guided hiking tours are arranged in the region around **Kulmbach**. Reservations are required at least two days in advance at the Kulmbach tourist office, ☎ 09252-92501.

An educational hiking trail goes from the Deutsches Dampflokomotivmuseum (German Steam Engine Museum) in **Neuenmarkt-Wirsberg to Markschorgast**. It follows the Schiefe Ebene – the first steep railway line in Europe. The hiking trail is just over eight km/five miles and can be done in around three hours. The trail is open from May to October and is marked with "SE."

On Wheels

By Bicycle

The Frankenwald is a true paradise for cycling fans and mountain bikers. The steep hills and deep valleys create constantly changing gradients, which make some routes very challenging. Descriptions of all the cycling routes in the Frankenwald are available online at www.frankenwald-aktiv.de.

A very easy 11-km/seven-mile route on paved roads without road traffic goes around the **Ködeltalsperre** (dam), 25 km/15 miles from Kronach. Bicycles can be rented at the dam, ☎ 09261-7616.

Von der Festung Zum Wasserschloss (Fortress to Moated Castle) is a more challenging circular route from Kronach through Mitwitz. It is almost 40 km/25 miles long with an overall climb of 380 m/1,250 ft.

The **Flößerei & Mühlen** (Rafting & Mills) route near Kronach is a 29-km/18-mile circular route with an overall climb of 450 m/1,480 ft. It passes through towns traditionally associated with rafting as well as past several former mills.

The Frankenwald has seven dedicated **mountain bike trails** that are mostly rated difficult. They range in distance from 25 to 60 km/15 to 37 miles with climbs between 820 and 1,700 m/2,700 to 5,580 ft. Four race-training routes are popular with experienced cyclers. The routes range from 75 to 99 km/47 to 62 miles, with climbs of up to 2,200 m/7,220 ft.

Bicycles can be rented in **Kronach** from **Radsport Dressel**, Schwedenstraße 31, ☎ 09261-3406; in **Kulmback** from **Eldorado**, Firma Kretschmann, Bayreuther Straße 40, ☎ 09221-64779; and in **Mitwitz** from **Hotel Wasserschloß**, L.-Frh.-v.-Würtzburgstraße 14, ☎ 09266-9670.

Sporthaus Erhardt, Kronacher Straße 6, ☎ 09261-2885, www.intersport-erhardt.de, in **Kronach-Neuses**, rents out Scott mountain bikes as well as inline skates.

By Train

About 20 km/12 miles east of Kulmbach is the **Deutsches Dampflokomotivmuseum** (German Steam Engine Museum), Birkenstraße 5, 95339 Neuenmarkt-Wirsberg, ☎ 09227-5700. It has 30 steam engines and a display on the Schiefe Ebene – the first steep railway line in Europe. It was constructed in 1848 and climbs 158 m/520 ft in just eight km/five miles. During summer, nostalgic train rides are available from the museum to the Bayerisches Brauereimuseum in Kulmbach and via the Schiefe Ebene to

Marktschorgast. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €4.

By Car

The **Frankenwaldhochstraße** (Franconian Forest High Route) is a scenic circular route that goes through some of the higher parts of the forest, with excellent views and panoramas. It is 150 km/93 miles and well signposted. It goes from Kronach to Ludwigstadt, Bad Streben, and Stadtsteinach near Kulmbach, before returning to Kronach.

On Water

Rafting

For centuries, wood was the Frankenwald's main source of income. Logs were bound together and rafted down the rivers, at times as far as the Rhine and all the way to the Netherlands. On Saturdays, from the end of May to early September, up to 20 rafts are sent down the Wilde Rodach River on 45-minute trips from **Wallenfels**. Information and reservations at Fremdenverkehrsamt Wallenfels, Rathausgasse 1, 96346 Wallenfels, ☎ 09262-945-21.

On Thursday at 7 pm, rafting is done on the calmer waters of the Rodach in **Kronach-Neuses**. For reservations, contact Herr Dunst, ☎ 09261-1316.

On Snow

For much of the winter the higher parts of the Frankenwald are covered in snow. With the highest elevation only 800 m/2,620 ft, alpine skiing is best left for southern Bavaria but more Nordic sports such as cross-country skiing are very well suited to the area. Snow information is available at ☎ 09261-6015-18.

Ski equipment can be rented in **Kronach-Neuses** from **Sporthaus Erhardt**, Kronacher Straße 6, ☎ 09261-2885, www.intersport-erhardt.de.

Where to Stay & Eat

Kronach

The **Stadthotel Pfarrhof** opened in 2003 inside a 16th-century building in the heart of the Old Town. Rooms are pleasant and individually furnished. The **Cranach-Stube** (€) serves only small dishes and the hotel will happily recommend nearby restaurants for full meals. Amtsgerichtstraße 12, 96317 Kronach, ☎ 09261-504-590, fax 09261-504-5999, www.stadthotel-pfarrhof.de. (€€)

Hotel-Restaurant Bauer is primarily famous for its **gourmet restaurant** (€-€€€) that serves mostly local cuisine but with a modern, light touch. Rooms are nice but not imaginatively furnished. It is at the edge of the Old Town. Kulmbacher Straße 7, 96317 Kronach, ☎ 08261-94-058, fax 09261-52-298, www.hotelbauerkronach.de. (€€)

Several restaurants on the main squares of the Old Town serve local cuisine. Close to the Rathaus is **Altes Druckhaus**, a modern restaurant with great food. (€-€€)

Kulmbach

The **NH Kulmbach** is the most comfortable hotel in Kulmbach. It is modern with large, bright, well-furnished rooms. It has all the facilities of a modern middle-class hotel and is next to a large park about 10 minutes walk from the Old Town. Bicycle rental is available. Luitpoldstrasse 2, 95326 Kulmbach, ☎ 09221-6030, fax 09221-603100, www.nh-hotels.com. (€€)

NH Kulmbach lobby

Hotel Kronprinz is in at the edge of the Old Town near Weißer Turm. Rooms are a bit bland but have all the necessities. The **café** (€-€€) serves mostly cakes and small snacks. Fischergasse 4-6, 95326 Kulmbach, ☎ 09221-92-180, fax 09221-921-836, www.kronprinz-kulmbach.de. (€€)

The **Burgschäncke**, ☎ 09221-81313, is at Plassenburg. It has a courtyard as well as two terraces with great views. Virtually all kinds of beer brewed in Kulmbach are on tap here. The menu is mostly snacks and small meals. (€-€€)

The **Kulmbacher Kommunbräu**, Grünwehr 17, ☎ 09221-84490, www.kommunbraeu.de, is just out of the Old Town area. It brews beer on four mornings a week and visitors are welcome to observe the brew master in action. Food is hearty local cuisine that goes well with beer. (€-€€)

The **Mönchshof-Bräuhaus**, Hofesrtraße 20, ☎ 09221-4262, is at the Kulmbacher Beer Museum and therefore frequented by many visitors, even though it is outside the Old Town area. They serve all kinds of Mönchshof beer with regional tavern food. There is a very pleasant beer garden as well as an atmospheric cellar. (€-€€)

Inside the Old Town, **Mönchshof** beer can be sampled at the **Stadtschänke**, Holzmarkt 3, 09221-4507, at the edge of the Old Town. Sausages feature on the menu. (€)

Youth Hostels

The **DJH Kronach** is beautifully located inside Festung Kronach. It is a 15-minute hike from the station. The hostel is closed mid-December to mid-January. Festung 1, 96317 Kronach, ☎ 09261-94-412, fax 09261-629-109.

Camping

Campingplatz Stadtsteinach is just outside this small town (Stadtsteinach) between Kronach and Kulmbach. It is well equipped with modern facilities. Badstraße 5, 95346 Stadtsteinach, ☎ 09225-800394, fax 09225-800-395, www.campingplatz-stadtsteinach.de.

Bayreuth

Bayreuth, a town of 73,000, is internationally famous for hosting the annual **Richard Wagner Festival**. Thanks to Margravine Wilhelmine, sister of Prussia's Frederick the Great, Bayreuth is also a town rich in Baroque and Rococo buildings.

The town was founded in the 12th century but only became important after the margrave of Brandenburg-Kulmbach moved his residence from the Plassenburg in Kulmback to the then new Altes Schloss in Bayreuth in 1603. Bayreuth's golden age was under the influence of **Wilhemine** (1709-1758). This talented woman was married off to the margrave of Brandenburg-Bayreuth. She found him dull and surrounded her court with talented artists and intellectuals. She loved the arts and was responsible for the construction of some of Bayreuth's finest Baroque buildings, with interiors in Bayreuth-Rococo, a style marked by dainty garlands and flowers. Voltaire was a guest and described Bayreuth as a wonderful, quiet town where one could enjoy all the pleasures of a large court without the discomfort of the wider world.

Richard Wagner (1813-83) chose Bayreuth in 1872 as setting for the construction of the Festspielhaus (Festival Theater), which was specially built to perform his works. The theater opened in 1876 with a performance of *The Ring* and the annual festival has been drawing crowds ever since. The festival is held from the end of July through August – the town is then best avoided if you are not attending the festival.

Tourist Office

Tourist Information, Luitpoldplatz 9, 95444 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-88-588, www.bayreuth.de. For theater tickets use the same address but ☎ 0921-69-001.

Bayreuth Card: The tourist office and most hotels sell the Bayreuth Card for €9. It is valid for three days and includes admission to nine museums, a guided walking tour, a daily newspaper, and unlimited use of local transportation. It is a very good deal if public transportation is used.

Getting Around

The railway station is a few minutes walk north of the Old Town. Frequent rail connections to Nürnberg take an hour on the Regional Express trains and 30 minutes on the InterCityExpress. Bamberg can be reached in just over an hour by hourly trains – some require a transfer in Licthenfels. Kulmbach is about half an hour away and Pegnitz 20 minutes by hourly Regional Express trains.

Sightseeing

Most of the sights in Bayreuth are within easy walking distance of each other in the Old Town – the top sights are the Opera and Neues Schloss. The Wagner-Museum is south of the Old Town and connected to the Neues Schloss by the lovely Hofgarten (Court Garden). The Festspielhaus is about 20 minutes walk north of the Old Town. The Ermitage is five km/three miles northeast of the Old Town on the B85.

Old Town

The **Markgräfliches Opernhaus** (Margraves' Opera House), Opernstraße 14, ☎ 0921-759-6922, was erected in the 18th century on orders of the Margravine

The Markgräfliches Opernhaus

In the Markgräfliches Opernhaus

Wilhelmine. It is considered the best-preserved, unaltered Baroque theater in Europe. It is fairly plain outside but the interior is in Rococo splendor with no surface left unpainted or ungilded. Astonishingly, the whole interior is made of wood. The theater was the largest in Germany up to 1871. Apparently, this theater drew Wagner to Bayreuth but he considered it unsuitable for his greatest works – it really is more suitable to magic flutes than riding Valkyries. Opening hours are daily from April to September 9 am to 6 pm and from October to March 10 am to 4 pm. Light and sound shows are every 45 minutes. Admission is €5 or €7 for a combination ticket with the Neues Schloss.

The **Schlosskirche**, Schlossberglein 1-3, ☎ 0921-65-427, is a single-aisle church completed in the mid-18th century. The mighty octagonal belfry is early 17th century. The church interior is Rococo and has the graves of the Margrave Friedrich and Margravine Wilhelmine.

Altes Schloss at the Eremitage

Adjacent is the **Altes Schloss** (Old Palace), which served as residence until Margrave Friedrich was careless with a candle in 1753 and most of the building burned down. The margrave moved to the Neues Schloss and the old palace was rebuilt in simplified form. It is now used as offices and not open for sightseeing.

From here, **Maximilianstraße** leads westwards. It is lined with several interesting buildings, starting with the **Altes Rathaus** (Old Town Hall), which houses the **Kunstmuseum** (Museum of Fine Arts), Maximilianstraße 33, ☎ 0921-764-5310. It has rotating exhibitions of 20th century art.

Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, during July and August also open on Monday. Admission is €1.60.

A few blocks northwest of the Old Town is the **Brauerei und Büttnerei Museum** (Brewery and Coopers' Workshop), Kulmbacher Straße 40, ☎ 0921-401-234, www.maisel.com. It is in a former brewery building of the Maisel firm and claims to be the most comprehensive beer museum in the world. The museum explains the complete producing process and consuming culture. It can only be seen on a guided tour, which is available daily at 2 pm. Admission is €4 and includes a beer at the end of the tour in the 1920s-style saloon.

The **Historisches Museum** (History Museum), Kirchplatz 6, ☎ 0921-764-0111, is inside a 17th-century building that once housed a Latin school. It has fine displays on the town's history. The emphasis is on the margrave years but the town's rather high profile during the Nazi regime is not ignored. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm; during July and August it is also open on Monday. Admission is €1.60.

The **Neues Schloss** (New Palace), Ludwigstraße 21, ☎ 0921-759-6921, www.schloesser.bayern.de, was erected in just two years (1753-55) by Joseph Saint Pierre on the orders of Margravine Wilhelmine after fire destroyed the Altes Schloss. It combined and converted a number of existing buildings. The interior is Rococo with the margravine's apartments particularly elaborate and in stark contrast to the more somber quarters of the margrave. It served as residence only until 1769 when the male line of the Brandenburg-Bayreuth Hohenzollern family died out and the territory passed on to the Ansbach line. They preferred their rather splendid palace in Ansbach (see *Mittelfranken*) and stripped the Neues Schloss of its furniture. On view now are some of the grand 140 rooms, including the Japanese Room and the Spiegelscherbenkabinett (Broken Mirror Cabinet), which is to a design of Wilhelmine. Several pastels by Wilhelmine are on display as well as a fine collection of faiences. The Palm Room is an excellent example of Bayreuth Rococo and has precious wood pan-

The Neues Schloss

eling as well as trompe l'oeil palm trees. Opening hours are daily from April to September 9 am to 6 pm and from October to March 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €4 or €7 for a combination ticket with the Markgräfliches Opernhaus.

The **Hofgarten** (Court Park) south of the Neues Schloss was partly converted to an English landscape park but the geometrical patterns of its Baroque origins are still clearly visible.

In the northern parts of the Hofgarten is the **Deutsches Freimauer Museum** (German Freemason Museum), Im Hofgarten 1, ☎ 0921-69-824, the only one of its kind in Germany. It illustrates the development of the movement from its origins in the Middle Ages to the present. Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm; Saturday 10 am to noon. Admission is €1.50.

Wagner Sites

The **Haus Wahnfried Wagner Museum**, Richard-Wagner-Straße 48, ☎ 0921-757-2816, www.wagnermuseum.de, is in the only house Wagner ever owned and it was built to his own designs. The name literally means peace through delusion. Only the façade survived World War II but the rest was meticulously restored during the 1970s. The museum is dedicated to the life and work of Wagner as well as the history of the Festspiele. Cherished possessions include original scores of several operas and instruments used by Wagner. Richard and Cosima Wagner are buried in the garden. Music is played at 10 am, noon, and 2 pm; a video is played at 11 am and 3 pm. Opening hours are daily from April to October 9 am to 5 pm, closing at 9 pm on Wednesday and Thursday. From November to March, opening hours are daily 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €4.

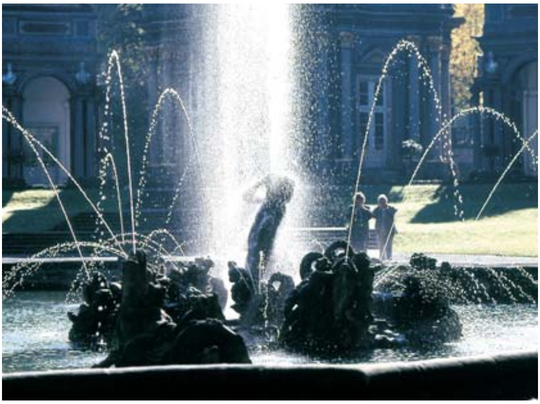
Bust of King Ludwig II in the Wagner Museum

Nearby is the **Franz Liszt Museum**, Wahnfriedstraße 9, ☎ 0921-516-6488, www.wagner-museum.de. Liszt (1811-1886) died here during one of the Festspiele. He was an admirer of Wagner's work, a friend, and eventually father-in-law. The museum has mainly pictures and manuscripts. Opening hours are daily 10 am to noon and 2 to 5 pm, in July and August 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €1.60.

The Festspielhaus

The **Festspielhaus** (Festival Theater), Festspielhügel 1-2, 95445 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-78-780, www.bayreuther-festspiele.de, is what many Wagner fans come to Bayreuth to see. It is a rather plain building inside and out. Wagner specified its design to emphasize the sound quality, not the aesthetics of the building or the comfort of the audience. The bare walls and uncovered, wooden seats enhance the acoustics. The building is still without air conditioning but water is sprayed on the roof during intervals. The orchestra plays in a pit below the stage from where the music is guided by soundboards to bounce of the wall behind the singers, so it can mix with their voices before being blasted to the audience. The acoustics even take into account the density of the spectators. Guided tours are scheduled from Tuesday to Sunday at 10 am, 11 am, 2, and 3 pm. No tours in November or during recitals. Admission is €3. The Festspielhaus is 30 minutes walk from the Old Town. By bus it can be reached on line 5 (direction Hohe Warte, stop Am Festspielhaus).

The Ermitage


Fountain at the Eremitage

The **Eremitage Altes Schloss**, Eremitage 1, 95448 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-759-6937, www.schloesser.bayern.de, five km/three miles east of Bayreuth, was the pleasure garden and summer palace of the margraves. It started off as an ascetic retreat, as was fashionable with European nobility in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. It was given to Margravine Wilhelmine in 1735. But she did not do asceticism. She converted the whole complex into a splendid Baroque and Rococo palace and made it a focal point of court life during the summer season. The influence of Margravine Wilhelmine is evident in many features, including the interior of the **Altes Schloss** (Old Palace). Its most impressive room is the Japanese Hall, with Asian furniture and decorations typical of the chinoiserie in vogue in Europe at the time. Between the two wings is a grotto with some 200 fountains, which could be activated in different ways to surprise unsuspecting guests.

The nearby **Neues Schloss** (New Palace) was erected between 1749 and 1753 to designs of court architect Joseph Saint Pierre. It encloses with half-round, arcaded wings a fantastic fountain complex with tritons and mythical figures. The palace was damaged by artillery fire at the end of World War II but rebuilt in simplified form. A rotunda at the center of the garden is a Temple of the Sun. Another folly in the garden is a fake ruin of a Roman theater where Wilhelmine at times took to the stage herself.

The musical fountains play daily from May to October 9 am to 6 pm on the hour. Opening hours for the Altes Schloss are daily from April to September 9 am to 6 pm; 1 to 15 October 10 am to 4 pm. Admission to the Altes Schloss is €3 and includes the obligatory tour. The park is open year-round for free. It can be reached on Bus 2 (stop Eremitage).

Cultural Events & Festivals

The Bayreuther Festspiele

Around 60,000 seats are annually available for the **Bayreuther Festspiele** (Bayreuth Festival), Festspielhügel 1-2, 95445 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-78-780, www.bayreuther-festspiele.de, held from the end of July through August. Applications for tickets open a year in advance and can only be made in writing to Kartenbüro der Bayreuther Festspiele, Postfach 100262, 95402 Bayreuth. Telephone information – but no reservations – is available weekdays between 11 am and noon at ☎ 0921-78-780. Applicants apparently have a 10% chance of success – being famous is said to help enormously. Ticket prices range from about €10 to €200.

In Bayreuth, culture does not start and end with Wagner. Frequent concerts, operas, ballet, musicals, and plays are staged in the Markgräfliches Opernhaus, modern Stadthalle, and smaller venues. Details and tickets are available through the tourist office.

Adventures

On Foot

Town Walks

Two-hour guided Old Town walks are arranged by the tourist information office from May to October, Tuesday to Saturday, at 10:30 am and from November to March on Saturday at 10:30 am only.

On Wheels

By Bicycle

It is an easy 100-km/60-mile cycle from Bayreuth to **Bamberg**. Follow the Roter Main until the confluence with the Weißer Main. From here, the **Main Tal Radweg** (Main Valley Cycling Route) follows the flow of the river all the way to the Rhine, around 400 km/250 miles away.

From March to November, the **ADFC Bayreuth** (Cycling Club), Thomas Neubauer, Leisau 69, 95497 Goldkronach, ☎ 09273-8263, www.adfc-bayreuth.de, arranges frequent guided cycling tours in the Bayreuth vicinity. Non-club members pay a nominal €2 for full-day tours and less for shorter routes.

Bicycles can be rented from **Fahrrad Keller**, Geigenreuth 2, ☎ 0921-7313400; **Radgarten**, Friedrichstraße 40, ☎ 0921-169-1901, www.radgarten.de; and **Frenzel**, Markgrafenalle 42, ☎ 0921-22472.

On Water

Spas

The **Lohengrin Therme**, Kurpromenade 5, 95448 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-792-4014, www.lohengrin-therme.de, is close to the Eremitage, six km/3.7 miles east of Bayreuth. The Thermenwelt has 12 pools. Admission to this area is €9 for three hours. The sauna requires about €4 extra, while in the wellness area charges depend on the required massages and other services. In contrast to the Thermenwelt, the sauna and wellness areas are nude. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to 10 pm; on Tuesdays the sauna and wellness areas are only open for woman. The spa can be reached on twice-hourly Bus line 3 in the direction of Seulbitz (stop Lohengrin Therme).

Where to Stay & Eat

Restaurant and hotel rate codes are shown on pages 50 and 52.

The **Ramada Treff Hotel Residenzschloss** is partly located in a former brewery. Rooms are modern, well equipped and very comfortable. Erlanger Straße 37, 95444 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-75-850, fax 0921-758-5601, www.ramada-treff.de. (€€-€€€)

Ramada Treff Hotel Residenzschloss

Hotel Goldener Anker

The **Hotel Goldener Anker**, in the heart of the Old Town near the Opera, has been managed by the Graf family since 1753. Rooms are well furnished with either antiques or modern furniture. The gourmet Art-Deco **restaurant** (€€€-€€€) serves mainly international and French cuisine. Opernstraße 6, 95444 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-65-051, fax 0921-65-500, www.anker-bayreuth.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Hotel Bayerischer Hof** is close to the station, near the Bayreuth Festspielhaus. Rooms are individually furnished, with the modern rooms the most comfortable. The **Gendarmerie** (€€-€€€) serves bistro-style food, with the front tables casual and those to the rear more formal. Bahnhofstraße 14, 95444 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-78-600, fax 0921-786-0560, www.bayerischer-hof.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Arvena Kongress Hotel** is outside the Old Town at the largest congress center in Oberfranken. Rooms are modern and functional. Although it has little character, prices can be remarkably low on a slow weekend. Eduard-Bayerlein-Straße 5a, 95445 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-17270, fax 0921-727-115, www.arvena.de. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Restaurant Lohmühle is a few minutes stroll from the Old Town. Many rooms in the historic half-timbered wing (a former saw-mill) have exposed beams, while those in the newer annex are correspondingly modern and functionally furnished. The main draw is the excellent **restaurant** (€€) that serves hearty local cuisine. Badstraße 37, 95444 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-53-060, fax 0921-5306-469, www.hotel-lohmuehle.de. (€€)

Brauereigasthof Goldener Löwe is, as the name indicates, a guesthouse attached to a brewery. It is a five-minute stroll from the Old Town. Rooms, all non-smoking, are rustic, with mostly wooden furniture. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves hearty local cuisine and, of course, has a wide variety of beer on tap. Kulmbacher Straße 30, 95445 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-746-060, fax 0921-47-777, www.goldener-loewe-bayreuth.de. (€€)

The adjacent **Hotel-Restaurant Spiegelmühle** is in an 18th-century former mill with simple, functional rooms. The cozy **restaurant** (€€) prepares old Franconian recipes. Kulmbacher Straße 28, 95445 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-41091, fax 0921-47320. (€€)

Hotel-Restaurant Spiegelmühle

The **Schlossgaststätte Eremitage** is in the former stables of the similarly named palace five km/three miles from the Old Town. The hotel has only eight large and individually furnished rooms, most of them in modern style. The **Café Orangerie** (€€) and **Schlossbiergarten** (€-€€) serves local cuisine with a light touch. Eremitage 6, 95448 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-799-970, fax 0921-799-9730, www.eremitage-gastro.de. (€€-€€€)

The very popular, modern **Oskar**, Maximilianstraße 33, ☎ 0921-516-0553, is in an annex to the Kunsthaus, inside the former Rathaus in the pedestrian zone. It serves mostly local cuisine and has a large vegetarian selection. There is live music some nights. (€-€€)

Near Bayreuth

Two luxury hotels near Bayreuth are worth noting. Six km/3.7 miles south of Bayreuth is the **Jagdschloss Thiergarten**. This luxury hotel and restaurant are in

Jagdschloss Thiergarten

Golf course at Jagdschloss Thiergarten

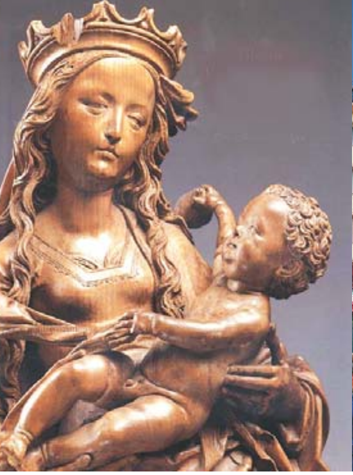
a 250-year-old former hunting lodge, with a golf course. It has only eight bedrooms but they are large and luxuriously furnished. The whole place has a lived-in, private country-house feeling. The stylish **Petit Chateau** (€€€) serves light local and nouvelle cuisine – jacket and tie required. The wood-paneled **Jagdstübrl** (€€) is more affordable and serves local cuisine with a large selection of game. Oberthiergärtner Straße 36, 95448 Bayreuth, ☎ 09209-9840, fax 09209-98429, www.schlosshotel-thiergarten.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Pflaums Posthotel

Half-an-hour's drive south of Bayreuth in the small town of Pegnitz is **Pflaums Posthotel**, one of the best and grandest in all of Franken. It is the hotel of choice for the rich and famous when visiting special events such as the Wagner Festspiele in Bayreuth. Behind the half-timbered façade is a very modern hotel. Rooms are comfortable and luxurious. The suites are over-the-top – some are ultramodern and even futuristic. Take a look at them on the Internet first before booking. The gourmet **Restaurant Pflaumen Garten** (€€€-€€€€) serves international nouvelle cuisine, while the **Posthalter Stube** (€€-€€€) is more rustic and serves local cuisine with a light touch. Both have a vast wine list and are known for excellent service and presentation. Nürnberger Straße 8-16, 91257 Pegnitz, ☎ 09241-7250, fax 09241-80404, www.ppp.com. (€€€-€€€€)

Youth Hostels

The **Bayreuth Europa-Jugendherberge** is a 15-minute walk south of the Old Town near the university and adjacent to the public swimming pool. Use Bus 6 to the Kreuzsteinbad stop or Bus 4 to the Mensa stop. It is closed from mid-December to late January. Universitätsstraße 28, 95447 Bayreuth, ☎ 0921-764380, fax 0921-512805, www.bayreuth.jugendherberge.de.



Staudengärtnerei Gabe

Unterfranken/Lower Franconia

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Würzburg 345
- Fränkische Weinland 359

Unterfranken (Lower Franconia) is another hodgepodge of different historical areas. Most of the region was for centuries part of the Bishopric of Würzburg.

The main destination in the region is Würzburg with its marvelous Baroque **Residence**. It is Balthasar Neumann's masterpiece and on the UNESCO World Cultural Heritage list. Würzburg also has the largest collection of works by sculpture **Tillman Riemenschneider**. The area is famous for its wine, with the banks of the Main River in the vicinity of Würzburg the most important producing areas. Towns in the Unterfranken are mostly small and very romantic.

Würzburg

Würzburg is a city of 130,000 on the banks of the River Main. It is famous for both its Baroque buildings and for being at the heart of the Franken wine region, which still uses flat, oval-shaped Bocksbeutel wine bottles.

Much of Würzburg's history was determined by religion. In 689, the Irish missionary St Kilian was murdered here and in 742, the Bishopric of Würzburg was founded. In the 12th century, Emperor Friedrich Barbarossa elevated the bishops to prince-bishops, who would rule the powerful Bishopric of Würzburg up to secularization in 1802.

The Würzburg bishops were generally able rulers and several constructed numerous churches and palaces. The most famous include Julius Echter von Mespelbrunn who led the Counter Reformation against Lutheranism in northern Franken, and the Von Schönborns, who erected numerous Baroque edifices, such as the wonderful Residenz. Although the bishops were allowed to use the title of Duke in Franken, they only ruled the bishopric and not the whole of Franken.

Following secularization, Würzburg briefly became part of Bavaria in 1803. From 1805 to 1814, it was the capital of the newly founded Archduchy of Würzburg. Würzburg finally became an irrevocable part of Bavaria in 1814.

Several important artists are closely associated with Würzburg, although none of them is native: the medieval poet Walther von der Vogelweide, sculptor and woodcarver Tilman Riemenschneider, Baroque master builder Balthasar Neumann, and the painter Giovanni Battista Tiepolo. Wilhelm Röntgen discovered X-rays here in 1895.

Tourist Office

Tourist information is available from Tourist Information, Falkenhaus am Markt, 97070 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-372-398, www.wuerzburg.de.

The **Würzburg Welcome Card** is sold by the tourist office. It costs €2 and is valid for a week. It gives discounts on admission fees to the major sights, theater, and the boat trip to Veitshöchheim.

Getting Around

Trams 1, 2, 3, and 5 connect the Hauptbahnhof with the Old Town, although the distance is only a few minutes walk. Of more use is Bus 9, which connects the Residenz and Festung Marienburg at least once per hour. It stops at Juliuspromenade, near the Hauptbahnhof.

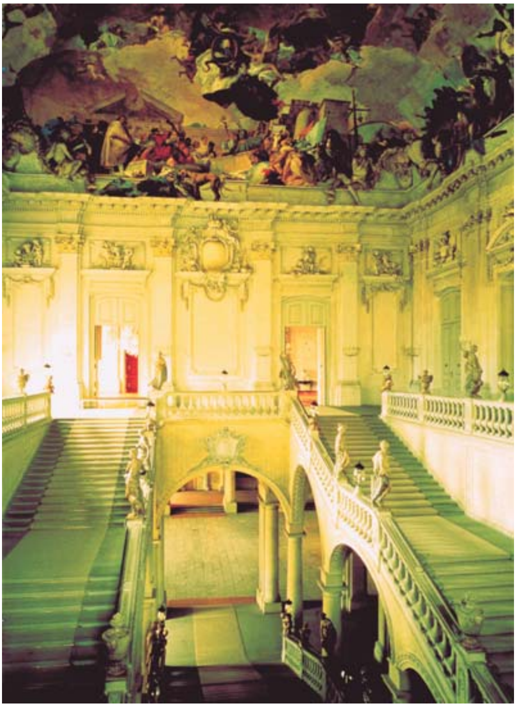
Sightseeing

Residenz

The Residenz (Residence), Residenzplatz 2, ☎ 0931-355-170, www.bsv.bayern.de, was constructed between 1720 and 1744 by Balthasar Neumann for the bishops of Würzburg. It is one of the finest Baroque palaces in Europe and is a UNESCO World Cultural

Heritage Site. Large parts of the Residenz were destroyed in 1945 but reconstructed. Original parts include the magnificent monumental Treppenhaus (staircase) with the vaulted ceiling containing the 600 m²/6,400-sq-ft fresco by Tiepolo; the Weißer Saal (White Hall) with stuccos by Bossi; the Kaisersaal (Imperial Hall) with more frescoes by Tiepolo; and the Gartensaal (Garden Hall) with frescoes by Johann Zick. The rich Rococo Paradezimmer (Parade Room) was reconstructed. Opening hours are daily from April to October, 9 am to 6 pm, and from November to March, 10 am to 4:30 pm. Admission is €4.50 and includes a 45-minute guided tour – daily in English at 11 am and 3 pm, more frequent in German. (Although the tour is not compulsory, it is the only way to see the south wing and mirrors cabinet.)

The Residenz



The Treppenhaus with Tiepolo's fresco

The **Hofkirche** (Court Chapel) is in the south wing of the Residenz, but visitors use a separate entrance. It was the private chapel of the bishop and is a superb example of Baroque architecture. Neumann had to adapt to the existing building and used hidden windows and mirrors to draw in light. The gilding here uses real gold, although the marble is fake. The frescoes are by Rudolf Byss, but the two paintings above the side altars are by Tiepolo. Opening hours are April to mid-October, daily from 9 am to 6 pm, closing at 8 pm on Thursday. From mid-October to March, it is open daily, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is free.

BALTHASAR NEUMANN (1687-1753)

Balthasar Neumann was born in Bohemia but moved to Würzburg in 1711 to serve in the military as gun and bell caster. However, within a year, his real talent was spotted and he started receiving training in military and civilian architecture. In 1719, Prince Bishop Philipp Franz von Schönborn entrusted the design of his new residence to Neumann. It took him 24 years to complete this palace but he created a Baroque masterpiece without equal. He went on to design numerous churches, palaces, gardens, bridges, and canals. Neumann's interiors are bright and succeed in creating a feeling of lightness and space larger than the actual physical volume. He is best remembered for his Baroque palaces and churches. In Würzburg, there is the Residenz, Hofkirche, Schönbornkapelle, Käppele, and Schloss Veithöchheim; in Bamberg, the Rose Garden and Diözesanmuseum; and in Oberfranken, the Basilika Vierzehnheiligen in Banz and the Wallfahrtbasilika in Gößweinstein. The Residenz and the Basilika Vierzehnheiligen are considered his best works.

The **Hofgarten** (Court Garden) is a formal Baroque garden with Italian and French sections. The eastern part of the garden offers great views of the palace façade. The garden is open until dark. Admission is free.

The **Martin von Wagner Museum**, ☎ 0931-312-288, in the south wing of the Residenz, has a fine gallery with European paintings and statues from the 14th to 19th century. It also has an interesting antiquities collection with Egyptian jewelry, Roman pottery, and Greek vases. To see the whole collection requires at least two visits since opening hours are complicated. The museum is open Tuesday to Saturday, with the art gallery open from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm and the antiquities collection from 2 to 5 pm. The two sections are open in turn on Sunday from 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. Admission is free.

Stift Haug *(Thomas Brechtel)*

Guided tours of the **Staatlicher Hofkeller** (National Wine Cellar), Residenzplatz 2, ☎ 0931-305-0931, www.hofkeller.de, are available on weekends from March to November and end with a glass of locally produced wine.

If walking from the Hauptbahnhof to the Residenz, take Bahnhofstraße and note **Stift Haug** (Collegiate Church) on the corner with Heinestraße. This church, completed in 1691 by Antonio Petrini, was the first large Baroque church in Franken. It has a twin-towered façade and a huge 60-m/197-ft-high dome. The rich interior was destroyed in 1945 and is now a simple white. It is worth entering to see the altar painting by Tintoretto (1583).

East Bank & Old Town

Alte Universität *(Robert Emmerich)*

From the Residenz to the heart of the Old Town is a short stroll down Hofstraße. However, it is worth taking a detour via Neubaustraße to see the **Alte Universität** (Old University). The university was founded in 1582 by Prince Bishop Julius Echter to compete with the established Protestant universities in Heidelberg, Marburg, and Wittenberg. Up to 1803, only Roman Catholic students and professors were admitted. The university produced eight Nobel Prize winners – mostly in Natural Sciences. The buildings, which were damaged during 1945 but largely restored, are Renaissance, with the **Neubaukirche** (New Church) considered one of the most important churches of this style in Germany (now used as an Aula). Its lovely Baroque tower by Petrini is, at 82 m/270 ft, the highest in town.

Nearby is the Early Gothic **Franziskanerkirche** (Franciscan Church), Franziskanergasse. The monastery was founded in 1221 and one of the oldest by this order north of the Alps. Although damaged during 1945, it was restored and has several noteworthy monuments and a *Pietà* by Tilman Riemenschneider. Also worth seeing is the Gothic Kreuzgang (Cloisters) from the 13th to 15th centuries.

From the Hauptbahnhof, it is barely a 10-minute walk to the heart of the Old Town. The most direct route follows the tramlines down Kaiserstraße, but first go down Röntgenring toward the Main for a block and a half. The **Röntgen-Gedächtnisstätte** (Röntgen Memorial), Röntgenring 8, ☎ 0931-351-1103, preserves the original laboratory, and some documents, where Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen discovered X-rays in 1895. He was awarded the Nobel Prize for Physics in 1901. Opening hours are weekdays from 9 am to 4 pm, closing at 3 pm on Friday. Admission is free.

The palatial **Juliusspital**, Juliuspromenade 19, ☎ 0931-393-1400, www.juliusspital.de, was erected in 1576 by Prince Bishop Julius Echter. It always more resembled a Baroque palace than a hospital and was used as a reception center by the bishops until the completion of the even more elaborate Residenz. In the basement is one of the loveliest Rococo pharmacies (Rokokoapotheke) in Germany. This pharmacy can be seen weekdays between 11 am and noon, or on request. Also in the basement are the cellars of the famed wine estate Juliusspital – with 163 ha/403 acres it is the third-largest in Germany. The interior of the building can only be seen on a tour in conjunction with a tour of the wine cellars. The tour is available from April to mid November at 5 pm on Friday (€5 with one glass of wine) and Saturday (€9 with three glasses of wine).

Nearby is the **Augustinerkirche** (Augustine Church), Dominkanerplatz. It has a High Gothic choir but the Baroque nave (1741) is by Balthasar Neumann and the stuccowork by Antonio Bossi.

The **Dom St Kilian** (Cathedral), Domerpfarrgasse 10, ☎ 0931-321-1830, retained its original 1188 exterior and, at 105 m/344 ft long, is the fourth-largest Romanesque church in Germany. The church burned out during 1945 and the nave collapsed a year later, but was restored to its original condition. The Baroque **Schönbornkapelle** (Schönborn Chapel) was constructed in 1721-36 by Balthasar Neumann. The interior of the Dom has several noteworthy artworks, including sandstone statues by Tilman Riemenschneider and 12th- to 17th-century funerary monuments for the bishops. Opening hours are Monday to Saturday 10 am to 5 pm, but it's closed between noon and 2 pm from November to Easter. On Sunday, it's open from 1 to 6 pm. The Schönbornkapelle can only be seen on the guided tour of the Dom, which takes place daily from Easter to October at 12:05 (Sunday at 12:30).

Dom St Kilian and the Rathaus *(Guliyev)*

The oldest part of the **Neumünster Church**, Kürschnerhof, is a triple-aisle Romanesque basilica built in the 11th century over the place where the Irish missionary St Kilian was murdered in 689 AD. However, later Baroque additions now dominate, with the impressive western façade attributed to Johann Dientzenhofer. The structural components survived the bombing of 1945, but much of the interior was destroyed. Some noteworthy artworks survived, including a *Madonna and Christ* by Tilman Riemenschneider. Behind the church, in the Lusamgärtlein, is the tomb of medieval troubadour Walther von der Vogelweide (1170-1230), who died in Würzburg.

ST KILIAN - FRANKEN'S FIRST MARTYR

Around 680, Kilian, an Irish missionary, arrived in Franken and succeeded in converting Duke Gosbert to Christianity. However, for Kilian, the warning that Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned came centuries too late. Kilian convinced Gosbert that living with his brother's widow, Gailana, was a mortal sin. He duly desisted and, in 689, a furious Gailana took her revenge by having Kilian and two assistants brutally murdered. Franken had its first martyr and the grave of St Kilian became a pilgrimage site and the center of Würzburg.

The ultramodern building of the **Museum am Dom**, Kiliansplatz, ☎ 0931-3866-5600, www.museum-am-dom.de, houses art from around 1100 to the present. The focus is on modern and contemporary art with works by well-known artists such as Otto Dix, Käthe Kollwitz, Picasso, and Andy Warhol. Mixed with these, as works are grouped thematically rather than chronologically, are works from the Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and Baroque. The collection includes about 10 works by Tilman Riemenschneider and his studio. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 6 pm from April to October. Admission is €3.50 (or €4.50 when combined with the Domschatz).

The small **Domschatz** (Cathedral Treasury), Plattnerstraße, ☎ 0931/3866-5600, www.museen.bistum-wuerzburg.de, is an exhibition of the bishopric's treasures. The items are arranged thematically to illustrate the three functions of the cathedral: graveyard, liturgy, and bishop's church. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €2 (or €4.50 when combined with the Museum am Dom).

TILMAN RIEMENSCHNEIDER

Tilman Riemenschneider was born around 1460 in Heilgenstadt, Thuringia. He probably learned his trade as sculptor and woodcarver in Strasbourg and Ulm. In 1483, he settled in Würzburg where he combined artistic skill and business talent to build up a successful practice. He owned a couple of houses in town, vineyards nearby, and a studio with several employees. He created numerous sculptures, mostly in sand-

stone, but it is for his extraordinary woodcarvings that he is best known. He brought the wood, especially local lime wood, to life. In contrast to other artists from the period, he seldom used color or paint – his talent was such that the plain carved wood expressed strong enough emotions without further assistance. He accepted major commissions from all over the region and made numerous altars, tomb monuments, and statues for churches and wealthy patrons.

From 1504 to 1524, he served on the town council and from 1520 as mayor of Würzburg. However, the bishop did not tolerate his open support for the peasants during the Peasants' War. He was incarcerated for two months in the dungeons of the Festung Marienberg. He was tortured and, although there is no proof that his hands or fingers were broken, he did not produce any major works in the last six years of his life that he spent quietly in Würzburg with his fourth wife. Although he was well known and highly respected during his lifetime, he was soon forgotten and only the chance rediscovery of his grave in 1822 restored him to fame. His works are sought after by all major museums worldwide but the best works are still in churches in Franken.

His major works include the tombs of Bishop Rudolf von Scherenberg and Bishop Lorenz von Bibra in the Würzburg Dom, the Mary Altar in Creglingen, the Münnerstadt Altar in Münnerstadt and the Bavarian Museum in Munich, the Holy Blood Altar in Rothenburg, the Madonna with Rosary in Volkach, and the tomb of Emperor Henry II in Bamberg. The Mainfränkische Museum in Würzburg, with 81 works, has the largest single collection.

Staudengärtnerei Gabel

Marienkapelle and Falkenhaus *(Christian VisualBeo Horvat)*

The **Falkenhaus** on the Markt has the loveliest mid-18th-century Rococo façade with stuccowork in Würzburg. It currently houses the municipal library and information office.

Adjacent is the **Marienkapelle** (St Mary's Chapel), a Gothic hall church erected by the town between 1377 and 1440. The neo-Gothic steeple has a double gilded 18th-century Madonna. The interior has noteworthy works by Tilman Riemenschneider, including the 1502 tombstone of Konrad von Schaumberg, and copies of the statues of Adam and Eve in the portal. (The originals are in the Mainfränkisches Museum). The church contains the tomb of the master Baroque architect Balthasar Neumann (1687-1753).

Parts of the Rathaus (Town Hall) date to the 13th century, while the Renaissance façade is from 1660. The tower is 180 ft high. Ironically, the oldest parts of the building survived the bombing of 1945, while most of the newer additions were destroyed and subsequently rebuilt.

Somewhat north of the Old Town is the **Kulturspeicher** (Culture Warehouse), Veitshöchheimer Straße 5, ☎ 0931-322-250, www.kulturspeicher.de. It houses a museum of modern art with the town's art collection as well as important temporary exhibitions. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 11 am to 6 pm, but opening at 1 pm on Tuesday and closing at 7 pm on Thursday. Admission is €3.50.

West Bank & Marienberg

The **Alte Mainbrücke** (Old Main Bridge) was constructed between 1473 and 1543 to replace a previous Romanesque bridge destroyed by floods. Twelve huge Baroque statues of saints, including Charlemagne, were added in the early 18th century.

From the bridge, note the **Alter Krane** (Old Crane) It was built between 1767 and 1773 by Franz Ignaz, son of Balthasar Neumann. The crane

Festung Marienberg *(Christian VisualBeo Horvat)*

was operated by human muscle power and reminds us of the importance of the Main trade to Würzburg.

Festung Marienberg (Fortress), ☎ 0931-355-1750, www.schloesser.bayern.de, served as primary residence of the bishops from 1253 to 1719. Its history, however, is much older. Celts first built a fort here around 1000 BC. In 706 AD, the first Marienkapelle (St Mary's Chapel) was erected. Construction of the fortress started around 1200. In the 17th century, it was altered to a Renaissance palace but, after the Thirty Years' War, it was converted into a Baroque fortress. Opening hours are from April to October, Tuesday to Sunday, 9 am to 6 pm. Admission is €2. (The two museums in the fortress have separate opening hours and admission fees.)

The former Baroque **Zeughaus** (Arsenal) now houses the **Mainfränkisches Museum** (Main Franconian), ☎ 0931-205-940, www.mainfraenkisches-museum.de. It has the largest collection of Tilman Riemenschneider works in the world, including the originals removed from the Dom. It also has exhibitions on local history as well as the role of wine in the regional economy and way of life. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 7 pm. Admission is €3 or €5 with the Fürstenbaumuseum.

In the east wing is the **Fürstenbaumuseum**, ☎ 0931-43-838. It includes the former bishops' apartments, treasury, and a section on the town's history. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €4 or €5 with the Mainfränkische Museum.

The fortress is a good 20-minute walk from the bottom of the hill or take Bus Line 9, which runs from the Residenz via the Juliuspromenade near the Hauptbahnhof to the top of the hill. Limited parking is available.

The finest views of Würzburg are from the terrace of the **Käppele**, Nikolausberg/Leutfresserweg, on a hill slightly farther upstream from the Marienfestung. This pilgrim's chapel is the last work by the Baroque master architect Balthasar Neumann. The stuccos are by

Johann Feuchtmayer and Materno Bossi and the frescos by Matthäus Günther. A miracle passage leads to the adjacent chapel of mercy. The Käppele is reached on foot via a steep walkway with many stairs and the Stations of the Cross.

Farther Afield

Schloss Veitshöchheim *(Julo)*

A very popular excursion from Würzburg is seven km/four miles downstream to **Schloss Veitshöchheim** (Palace), Hofgarten 1, 97209 Veithöchheim, ☎ 0931-91-582. The original pleasure palace was erected in 1680, but the present building is the work of Balthasar Neumann who extended the palace in 1753 as a summer residence for the prince bishop. The interior is Classical as was favored in the early 19th century, but some Baroque stuccowork by Antonio Bossi survived. Opening hours are from April to October, Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to noon and 2 to 5 pm. Guided tours are compulsory and start on the full hour. Admission is €3.

As with Schloss Schönbusch in Aschaffenburg, the main reason to visit is not the palace but rather the garden. The magnificent **Rokokogarten** (Rococo garden) is fairly small and that saved it. It is only 500 by 250 m/550 by 275 yards and was too small to convert to an English-style landscape garden as happened elsewhere. The garden has over 200 statues of gods, animals, and mythical figures – most are copies, with the originals in the Mainfränkisches Museum. The gardens are open daily from 7 am to 8 pm (or dark). The fountains play daily from April to end October on the hour between 1 and 5 pm. Admission is free.

The classical approach from Würzburg is by boat (see *Adventures*). Alternatively, Veitshöchheim can also be reached by hourly train (seven minutes) or on Bus 11 and 19 (stop Kirchplatz or Bilhildisstraße) from Würzburg.

Cultural Events

Contact the tourist office for information and reservations on the following festivals.

Mozartfest at the Residenz

The **Mozartfest** (Mozart Festival) is the best-known musical event in Würzburg and attracts internationally renowned orchestras and conductors. It is held mainly during June, using several venues, including the Residenz.

The **Bachtage** (Bach Days) are held the last week of November. They involve several Bach performances, including a 100-voice choir.

The **Barockfeste** (Baroque Festival) is held at the end of May, with music and fine dining in the Residenz.

The **Africa-Festival**, held end of May, early June, claims to be the largest African music festival in Europe.

Wine Festivals

Würzburg is at the heart of the Franconian wine lands and sees eight major wine-related festivals annually. Most are held in May or June, but a highlight is the **Wine Parade** at the Dom, held the last week of July. For exact details contact the tourism office and for wine festivals in the whole area, inquire from **Fränkischer Weinbauverband**, Haus des Frankenweins, Kranenkai 1, 97070 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-390-1111, www.weinland-franken.de.

Adventures

On Foot

Town Walks

The tourist office conducts 90-minute walking tours of the Old Town daily from April to October at 10:30 am. The tour departs from the tourist office at the Markt. Once a month, tours of 17th-century witch-hunt sights are available.

Night tours conducted by a night watchman, Wolfgang Mainka, ☎ 0931-409-356, start from the Vierröhrenbrunnen at the Rathaus. The 60-minute tour is available at 8 and 9 pm on Friday and Saturday from mid-January to March, and Wednesday to Saturday from April to shortly before Christmas.

Würzburg has two lovely four-km/2½-mile country hiking trails in town. Just north of the Hauptbahnhof is the **Stein-Wein-Pfad** (Stein Wine Route). It starts from the vineyard of Weingut Ludwig Knoll, Mittlerer Steinbergweg 5, and follows a circular route through some of the most famous vineyards in Franken. The views from the hills of the Main Valley and Würzburg are spectacular. A similar route, also through some vineyards and even more spectacular views, is the **Weinwanderweg Schlossberg** (Wine Hiking Trail) leading up the steep hill to the Fortress Marienberg. It starts at the Alte Brücke and down Burkarderstraße.

On Wheels

By Bicycle

Cycling is popular in the Würzburg area, with a cycling route running the full length of the River Main. **Der Rad-Touren-Teufel**, Erthalterstraße 18, 97074 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-882-830, www.radtourenteufel.de, arranges multi-day cycling tours with luggage transfers, rental bicycle, accommodations, and maps.

Bicycle rentals are available from **Fahrradstation**, Am Hauptbahnhof, ☎ 0931-57-445; **Radsport Schuster,** Raiffeisenstraße 3, ☎ 0931-12-338; or **Velo-Momber**, Landwehrstraße 13, ☎ 0931-12-627.

In the Air

Hot-Air Ballooning

Bernhardt Ballonfahrten, Am Feller 8, 97234 Reichenberg, ☎ 09366-99-211, www.bernhardt-ballonfahrten.de, starts balloon flights from several sites in Franken including Würzburg.

On Water

Riverboats

From April to October, several companies operate boat cruises on the River Main. Boats depart from the Alter Kranen near the Congress Centrum. A popular excursion is the 40-minute trip to Veitshöchheim run by **Kurth und Schiebe**, Alter Kranen, Roter Kiosk, ☎ 0931-58-573, or **Veitshöchheimer Personenschifffahrt**, Alter Kranen, Weißer Kiosk, ☎ 0931-55-631.

Where to Stay & Eat

Old Town Center

The **Maritim Hotel** is beautifully located on the banks of the Main close to both the main station and the Old Town. Rooms are luxurious and spacious with some having views of the Marienberg. The **Viaggo** (€€€) is open for dinner only and serves international cuisine with a strong Mediterranean selection. Pleichertorstraße 5, 97070 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-30-530, fax 0931-305-3900, www.maritim.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Maritim Hotel

The **Best Western Hotel Rebstock**, in the center of the town, has an early 18th-century Rococo façade and a refined interior. The **restaurant** (€€€-€€€€) serves classical dishes and has an excellent wine list. Neubaustraße 7, 97070 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-30-930, fax 0931-309-3100, www.rebstock.com. (€€€€)

The **Dorint Novotel** is a modern, comfortable hotel with a very convenient location between the station and the Residenz. The rustic **Frankenstube** (€€-€€€) serves mostly local specialties. Ludwigstraße/Ecke Eichstraße, 97070 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-30-540, fax 0931-305-4423, www.accorhotels.de. (€€€)

Zur Stadt Mainz

Zur Stadt Mainz is behind an original, colorfully painted façade dating from 1430. The 15 rooms are comfortably furnished with country-style furniture. The rustic **restaurant** (€€-€€€) has an old-Franconian atmosphere and serves regional dishes; reservations are recommended. Semmelstraße 39, 97070 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-53-155, fax 0931-58-510, www.hotel-stadtmainz.de. (€€)

Left Bank

The **Mercure am Mainufer** is a modern hotel on the left bank of the Main and is especially popular with business travelers. Rooms are well equipped and comfortable. Dreikronenstraße 27, 97082 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-41-930, fax 0931-419-3460, www.accor-hotels.com. (€€)

A block from here is the **Restaurant Schiffbäuerin**, Katzengasse 7, ☎ 0931-42-487. It is a rustic, typical Franconian establishment serving regional dishes featuring fish. (€€-€€€)

Just south of the Marienberg is the excellent **Bacchus Stuben**, Leistenstraße 6, ☎ 0931-883-739. The nostalgic Art Nouveau restaurant serves international cuisine, including both light dishes and hearty local specialties. (€€-€€€)

Youth Hostel

The **DJH Würzburg** is on the left bank below the Marienfestung. It is 25 minutes walk from the station. Alternatively, take Tram 3 or 5 to stop Löwenbrücke, which is five minutes walk from the hostel. The hostel is closed the week preceding Christmas. Burkarderstraße 44, 97082 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-42-590, fax 0931-416-862.

Camping

Camping Kalte Quelle is on the banks of the River Main south of Würzburg. It has rather basic facilities with 170 lots for tourists and 130 for long-term rental. It is open from mid-March to late November. 97084 Würzburg-Heidingsfeld, ☎ 0931-65-598, fax 0931-612-611.

Fränkische Weinland (Franconian Wine Land)

The Main River is 524 km/326 miles from its source to its confluence with the Rhine at Mainz. It flows through various wide "S" bends and is often lined by vineyards. Nowhere is the valley more picturesque than the J shape upriver from Würzburg to Schweinfurt. This is known as the Fränkische Weinland (Franconian Wine Land) and the landscape is littered with picturesque villages and vineyards. Wine and tourism play central roles in the economy and lifestyle of this region but, as so often in Germany, culture and history are never far behind.

The towns upriver from Würzburg are small and picturesque. Many have largely intact town walls, a few watch towers, a main road running parallel to the Main, seemingly endless half-timbered buildings, Rathäuser (Town Halls) dominating the civilian townscape, at least one village church, and huge numbers of guesthouses and vintners.

From Würzburg to Schweinfurt along the Main is only 80 km/50 miles. The area can thus easily be seen in a single day, though it would be pleasant to linger a week. It may be best to pick two or three villages and linger longer in each rather than rush through all.

Tourist Office

Tourismusverband Fränkisches Weinland, Am Congress Centrum, 97070 Würzburg, ☎ 0931-372-335, fax 0931-373-793, www.fraenkisches-weinland.de.

Getting Around

A car makes visiting the small villages in the area much easier but other public transportation is available. At least two trains per hour connect Würzburg and Schweinfurt in half an hour. Hourly trains are available from Würzburg to Ochsenfurt and Marktbreit as well as to Kitzingen and Iphofen. Other towns can be reached by local bus. Distances between many of the towns are very small, making hiking and cycling viable options. For boating, see *Adventures*.

Sommerhausen

Tourist Office

Verkehrsverein, Hauptstraße 15, 97286 Sommerhausen, ☎ 09333-8256, www.sommerhausen.de.

Old Town

Sommerhausen

In this part of Franken, Sommerhausen is the exception, rather than the rule. Like other towns in the region, it has a largely intact town wall, a Renaissance **Rathaus** (Town Hall) with interesting gables, the **Bartholomäuskirche** with a 13th-century tower, and many fine half-timbered houses. There is even a 15th-century Schloss. However, it has a different feel from other Main towns. Starting in the mid-20th century, many artists moved into the Old Town, while the original residents settled in new, more comfortable houses in the outskirts of the town. It is a fine Old Town to stroll, in with a historical look and old buildings, but there are many studios and boutiques typical of a town dominated by an artistic community.

The town of only 1,800 inhabitants is famous for its wide range of cultural offerings – see *Culture*. Especially noteworthy is the **Torturmtheater**, the smallest theater in Germany, with only 50 seats. First used in 1950, it is inside a former town gate and is famous for staging the first productions of contemporary dramas.

Note that parking is only allowed outside the town walls. Since the Old Town is so small, this is hardly an inconvenience.

Ochsenfurt

It was already known in Carolingian times that the Main could be forded at Ochsenfurt. A bridge was built here during the mid-13th century and established the town as a major trading post on the Main during the Middle Ages.

Ochsenfurt (population 11,000) is a typical Main town with a largely intact, almost square walled-in Old Town. Half-timbered buildings abound and the Rathaus (Town Hall) is one of the most impressive in the region.

Tourist Office

Tourist-Information, Hauptstraße 36, 97199 Ochsenfurt, ☎ 09331-5855, www.ochsenfurt.de.

Old Town

The number of half-timbered houses in Ochsenfurt seems endless – the best examples are in the **Hauptstraße** that runs from town gate to town gate parallel to the Main.

The most impressive building in town is the **Neues Rathaus** (New Town Hall). “New” here primarily indicates that it replaced the **Altes Rathaus** (Old Town Hall), corner of Hauptstraße and Brückengasse, and now housing the town library, as it was completed in 1515. The Neues Rathaus is oxblood red and has the external staircase with Late Gothic balustrades that is typical of the region. Underneath the staircase was the Narrenhaus (Fools House) that was mostly used to incarcerate drunks. The symbol of

Klingentorturm gate in Ochsenfurt

Ochsenfurt is the **Lanzentürmchen** (Small Lance Tower), a slender lantern-like tower that protrudes from the façade of the Rathaus with a special mechanical clock dating back to 1560. On the hour, two oxen ram their horns, a skeleton turns the hourglass, while a town elder and maiden look on. It is possible to observe the mechanism from the top floor.

Farther up Hauptstraße is the triple-nave Gothic **Stadtpfarrkirche St Andreas** (St Andrews Parish Church). It was completed in 1390 but the tower is a century older. The interior is worth seeing, with impressive choir stalls, a Renaissance altar, a tabernacle from the studio of Adam Kraft, and a bronze baptismal font (1415) from the studio of Peter Vischer. The artistic highlight is the carved wooden statue of St Nikolaus (1510), attributed to Tielman Riemenschneider. It is worth visiting the adjacent 15th-century **Friedhofskapelle St Michael** (Cemetery Chapel), which has a tympanum of *The Last Judgment* and impressive stained-glass windows.

Tückelhausen

Three km/1.8 miles inland from Ochsenfurt is the small town of Tückelhausen, with a former **Kartäuserkloster** (Carthusian Monastery), ☎ 09331-386-261, www.museen.bistum-wuerzburg.de/tueckelhausen. In 1351, the Carthusians moved into a monastery that had already operated for over two centuries. They adapted the buildings to the needs of their motto "Together Alone." Off the cloisters, 14 separate houses with individual gardens were erected so the monks could spend most of their time alone in their cells. They only met each other for church services and even took their meals alone in their cells, except on Sundays and major holidays. Following enforced secularization in 1803, 12 of these houses were converted into apartments and are still used privately. However, the exteriors were not significantly altered and the whole former monastery complex still gives a very good overview of the ideal Carthusian design.

The former monastery church is now used by the local parish. It is in essence a Romanesque structure, but received its present, early 17th-century appearance courtesy of Bishop Julius Echter. It also has an impressive Baroque altar (1758). Two of the former cells now house the **Fränkische Kartausenmuseum** (Franconian Carthusian Museum) with exhibitions on the history of the former monastery. Opening hours are limited to weekends from May to October 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

Tückelhausen is best reached by private car or a pleasant 90-minute hike from Ochsenfurt.

Frickenhausen

Frickenhausen, www.frickenhausen-main.de, is a lovely, walled-in vintners' town of only 1,200 inhabitants. Like other such "*Wehrhaften Zwergen*" (well-fortified dwarfs) on the Main, it has no particularly important sights other than the Old Town itself and the ramparts with four town gates. The **Rathaus** (Town Hall) is probably 15th century and a Baroque **Mariensäule** (Mary Column) with coats of arms confirm that this town was part of the Bishopric of Würzburg.

Marktbreit

Malerwinkel (Immanuel Giel)

In contrast to most other towns in the region, Marktbreit did not belong to the Bishopric of Würzburg and was thus free to opt for the Lutheran Reformation in 1552. It was once a rich city, with its wealth based on river traffic and the coffee trade, but changing trade routes ended that in during the 19th century. Economically, the town never recovered, but the elegant buildings in the Old Town still recall the grandeur of days long past. Marktbreit is the at the southernmost point of the ever-meandering Main River.

Tourist Office

Tourist-Informationsbüro, Mainstraße 6, 97340 Marktbreit, ☎ 09332-591-595, www.marktbreit.de.

Old Town

One of the most romantic settings in the region is the so-called **Malerwinkel** (Painters' Corner). It is a magnificent and romantic part of Marktbreit, with a remarkable Renaissance ensemble formed by the Rathaus (Town Hall), Maintor (Main Gate), Breitbachbrücke (bridge), and two Baroque patrician houses with lovely oriels.

The **Rathaus** (Town Hall) was completed in 1581 in a Late Renaissance style. The building has two statues of St George slaying the

St George, on the Rathaus *(Metzner)*

dragon: the one on the gable indicated to passing ships the town's right to charge toll fees and the one on the side of the building indicated the town's market rights. From the same period is the **Seinsheimer Schloss** (Palace) now used as library and exhibition space.

On the bank of the Main is the **Tretradkran** (Treadmill Crane). It was built in 1784 – a time when the town's position as trading post was significant enough to warrant such construction to help load boats. The crane was driven by a treadmill operated by humans using either paid labor or, when available, convicts. It was in operation until 1900.

ALOYS ALZHEIMER (1864-1915)

Marktbreit's most famous son is Dr Aloys Alzheimer, who in 1901 first diagnosed the brain wasting disease named after him while working in Frankfurt. He was born in the house at Ochsenfurter Straße 15a, which is now used by Eli Lilly as a memorial and meeting venue. The interior can only be seen on prior request via the tourist office.

Farther Afield

In 1985, it was discovered that a **Römerlager** (Roman camp) was once on the Kapellenberg just north of Marktbreit. This camp showed the Romans penetrated farther east and deeper into "barbaric" Germany than was previously thought. The camp was probably used between 5 BC and 9 AD, as the rather meager number and quality of archeological finds show that it was not used for long. A two-km/1.2-mile circular hike from the Main crane leads to the top of the hill. Nothing can actually be seen of the Roman camp itself but the views are worth the hike.

Kitzingen

Kitzingen, a town of 21,000, is second only to Würzburg in the Franconian wine trade. Unfortunately, the town was severely damaged during World War II and thus has less of the historic charm that typifies other wine towns in the region. This is unfortunate as the town's history dates back to the foundation of a monastery in 745.

The construction of a bridge across the Main around 1300 assured the town's future wealth – the bridge was only destroyed in the 1950s to allow modern ships to pass the town. From 1443, the town belonged to the margrave of Brandenburg, who introduced the Lutheran Reformation early on. However, in 1629, the town reverted to the Bishopric of Würzburg and about 1,000 inhabitants who refused to return to Roman Catholicism were chased out of the town.

Tourist Office

Tourist Information, Schrannenstraße 1, 97318 Kitzingen, ☎ 09321-920-019, www.kitzingen.info.

Old Town

Of the original town wall of Kitzingen, only some parts facing the Main and the 15th-century Falterturm survived. The 52-m/170-ft-high **Falterturm** (guard tower), with its skew roof, is the symbol of Kitzingen. It houses the **Deustches Fastnachmuseum** (German Carnival Museum) with exhibitions on the German Carnival tradition from Celtic times to the present. Opening hours are weekends from 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €2.50.

The Falterturm *(Roland Popp)*

The **Markt** (Market Square) still has some of the town's former charm – the Renaissance **Rathaus** (Town Hall), with a steep, three-story roof, and the **Pfarrkirche St. Johannes der Täufer** (Parish Church St John the Baptist). It is a triple-nave, Late Gothic church dating from the 15th century and the oldest building in town. The main portal has an early 15th-century tympanum of *The Last Judgment*.

Etwashausen

Heiligkreuzkirche (*Michael Hofmann*)

On the opposite side of the Main is the community of Etwashausen. It is mostly visited to see the 1745 **Heiligkreuzkirche** (Holy Cross Church) designed by Balthasar Neumann for Prince Bishop Friedrich Carl von Schönborn. At the request of the bishop, the interior is painted plain white and devoid of any other paintings, statues, and overwhelming stuccowork that so typify Neumann churches. Even the altars and chancels are un-Baroque in their restraint. As a result, the interior emphasizes the architecture like no other Neumann church. Neumann's design for the dome exceeded the skills of the local builders, who simplified the design and thereby ruined some of the intended lightness with more stark structures. Neumann's floor plan was used on the back of the now defunct DM50 note.

Sulzfeld

Sulzfeld is an idyllic Franconian wine town of only 1,250 inhabitants three km/two miles south of Kitzignen. The Old Town is surrounded by an intact town wall 900 m/3,000 ft long with 18 individually designed watchtowers – some still inhabited – and three monumental town gates.

The three-story, Late Renaissance gabled **Rathaus** (Town Hall) was completed in 1609 on orders of Prince Bishop Julius Echter. The town then had only 350 inhabitants and the new building clearly exceeded their needs. (It is reck-

Fachwerk house in Sulzfeld (*p.schmelzle*) oned that the present town population could fit in the hall with ease.) However, this monumental building was an in-your-face gesture aimed at the Protestant count of Ansbach, who ruled the opposite bank of the Main. In front is a Mariensäule, erected in 1724.

Many houses in Sulzfeld are adorned with **Hausfiguren** (sculptures of the Madonna, saints, etc). A particularly fine selection can be seen on the façades of houses in Zehnt, Friesen, and Kettengasse. Also, note the Bürgerhaus (1568), a Renaissance house with an interesting swallowtail gable.

THE METERBRATWURST

Sulzfeld is famous for its Meterbratwurst – thin bratwurst that is exactly one meter/3.28 ft long and served neatly curled on a plate, usually with sauerkraut and potatoes in various forms. According to legend, a stranger told the landlady of the Gasthaus zum Goldenen Löwen that the sausage served was so good he could eat another meter. She promptly served one and, after the joke died down, it became a permanent fixture on her menu and many others. Sausage-eating contests are frequently held. The current record set in 2006 is 5.73 m/6.3 yards consumed in two hours with at least one side dish. The preferred accompaniment is local wine rather than beer. See www.meterbratwurst.de.

Iphofen

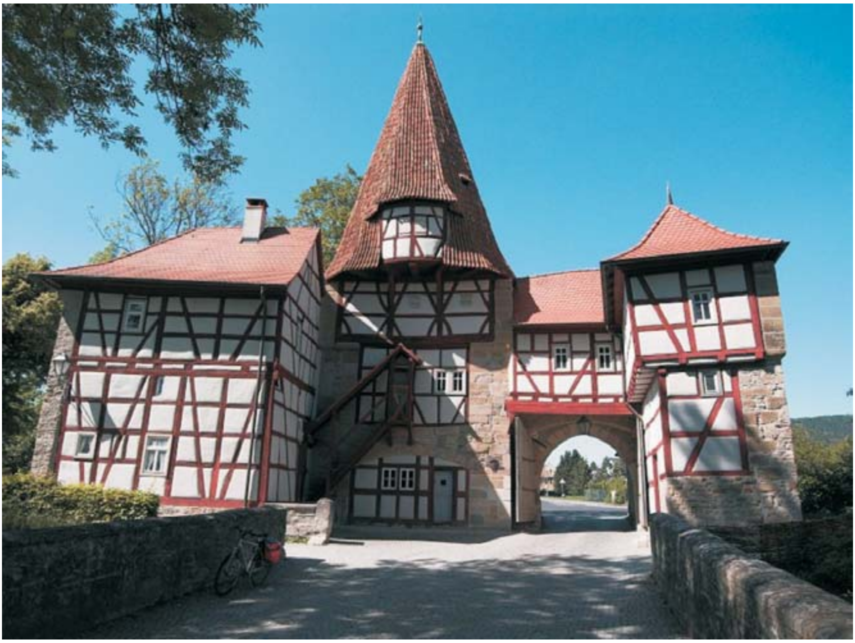
Iphofen, a town of around 3,000, is one of the most romantic in the region. It is enclosed by a wall with towers and arguably the most romantic half-timbered town gate in Germany. The town is eight km/five miles inland from the Main at the foot of the Steigerwald hills and an excellent location for producing wine. Some of the best Franken wines are produced here and the town is proud that a Julius Echterberg wine was served at the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

Iphofen's history goes back to the eighth century but it received town rights in 1293. In the same year, the town wall was erected and periodically expanded. Although the town buildings mostly escaped war damage, the town people bore a heavy burden during the Thirty Years' War. In 1632 alone, it was plundered, by "friends" and foes, no fewer than 14 times!

Tourist Office

Tourist Information, Kirchplatz 7, 97346 Iphofen, ☎ 09323-870-306, www.iphofen.de.

Old Town



Rödelseer Tor (Kassandro)

The Old Town of Iphofen is surrounded by a largely intact **town wall**. Several towers survived as well as three monumental town gates. The most impressive is the **Rödelseer Tor**, one of the most romantic scenes in all of Franken. It dates from the 15th century and its development was clearly organic rather than planned. In addition to the town gate, the structure has a steep roof, and a lovely oxblood-colored half-timbered framework. Although this gate controlled entry into the town, its purpose was to protect access to the real town gate that was in the nearby **Mittagsturm** (literally, Afternoon Tower). In medieval times, a wet moat and another defensive wall had separated the two gates

Mittagsturm *(Kassandro)*

The **Mainbernheimer Tor** on the west side of the town is the simplest of the surviving three gates. Nearby, on Julius-Echter-Platz, is the **Spital St Johannes der Täufer** (Hospice St John the Baptist). It was founded in 1338 and the present building was erected in 1607 by Prince Bishop Julius Echter in typical Echter style, i.e., Late Gothic. The hospice took care of needy locals – among other things, they were granted three glasses of local wine per day.

Near the Rödelseer Tor is the **Kirche St Veit** (St Veit Church). Building commenced in the early 15th century and was completed two centuries later under the sponsorship of Prince Bishop Julius Echter. The church carries the hallmarks of his preferences – mostly Gothic in style but with a bright, almost festive white-and-yellow Baroque interior. The artistic highlight is the wood-carved statue of St John the Evangelist, attributed to Tilman Riemenschneider, while the one of St John the Baptist may be by some of his scholars.

At the northern end of the long, narrow **Marktplatz** (Market Square) is the **Rathaus**. In contrast to most others in the region, this one is Baroque rather than Renaissance. It was erected early in the 18th century to designs of Josef Greising (Balthasar Neumann's predecessor) and intended to show off the power and wealth of the prince bishop of Würzburg. It has an external double staircase leading to the Baroque portal. Underneath the stairs were the customary detention cells for minor offences – the cells here were called the *Hundslöchli* (doghouse).

The buildings on the Marktplatz include examples of all styles from medieval times to modern glass and steel. Note the oxblood-red **Information Office** and **Vinothek**, Kirchplatz 7, ☎ 09323-870-317, www.vinothek.iphofen.de. Local wines can be sampled here by the glass.

At the south end of the square is the **Knauf Museum**, Am Marktplatz, ☎ 09323-31-528, www.knauf-museum.iphofen.de, with over 200 life-size plaster replicas of famous reliefs and statues from ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Rome, and even the Americas. The museum is housed in a 17th-century Baroque palace. Opening hours are from end of March to mid-November, Tuesday to Saturday 10 am to noon and 2 to 5 pm, Sunday 2 to 6 pm. Admission is €2.

Mönchsondheim

Just south of Iphofen is the small town of Mönchsondheim, which calls itself an inhabited museum town. The main draw is the open-air **Kirchenburgmuseum**, 97346 Iphofen-Mönchsondheim, ☎ 09326-1224, www.kirchenburgmuseum.de. It has 17 craft studios, 12 agricultural rooms, and six dedicated to wine-making spread over several buildings – including the Rathaus (1557) and the former school (1927). Opening hours are from mid-March to end of November, Tuesday to Saturday 1:30 to 6 pm, Sunday 11 am to 6 pm. Admission is €3. The museum is best reached by car or a one-hour walk from Iphofen along the four-km/2½-mile Museumsweg.

Mainbernheim

If driving from Kitzingen to Iphofen, it is absolutely worth stopping in **Mainbernheim**, www.mainbernheim.de. This is another of the region's picture-perfect towns and, as an added bonus, it receives fewer visitors than those on the banks of the Main.

With a history going back to the ninth century, the town is completely encircled by a **town wall** about one km/0.6-mile long, with 18 watch-towers and two town gates. The Early Renaissance **Rathaus** was completed in 1548. The Lutheran **St Johanniskirche** (St John's) was erected in 1732 on 15th-century foundations. Other Renaissance and half-timbered buildings complete the romantic ensemble.

Bus 166 runs hourly to Kitzingen in 15 minutes.

Dettelbach

Dettelbach, with about 6,000 inhabitants, is a typical wine town. It is one of the oldest settlements in Franken, with a history dating back to at least 741. It received town and market rights in 1484 and the town defenses date from this period. There are two interesting churches in addition to the attractive Rathaus.

Tourist Office

Kultur- und Tourismusamt im historischen Rathaus, Rathausplatz 1, 97337 Dettelbach, ☎ 09324-3560, www.dettelbach.de.

Old Town

Dettelbach's Old Town is almost completely encircled by its **town wall**. Of the original 52 watchtowers, 36 survived, many converted into homes. The towers follow a fixed pattern – every tall one is followed by two smaller ones. Two town gates survived to the present.

In contrast to many other Main towns, the **Rathaus** (Town Hall) here is Late Gothic rather than Renaissance. It was completed in 1512, shortly before work started on most of the other town halls in the region. There is an external double flight of stairs ending at a large Gothic portal with an oriel stretching to the roof. Half-timbered houses and a stream running along the main road through the town enhance the medieval feeling of the town core.

Nearby is the **Pfarrkirche St Augustinis** (Parish Church), Kirchplatz. This 15th-century, white-and-yellow church is most famous for its two distinct towers. The square one was completed in 1444, while the small round one is a century younger. The two are connected by a wooden bridge near their tops. The purpose of the round tower is unclear but as the room on the top of the square tower can only be reached via the round tower and the wooden bridge, it is speculated that doorways and stairs were forgotten when the original square tower was erected. The interior of the church is modern.

The most famous sight in Dettelbach is just north of the Old Town, the **Wallfahrtskirche Maria im Sand** (Pilgrims' Church of Mary in the Sand). The present church was erected by Prince Bishop Julius Echter in 1606 and is typical of his tastes: Late Gothic, black-slate roof, and an elaborate portal with his coat of arms. The Renaissance portal and pulpit were made by Michael Kern in the 1620s. The interior is elaborate Gothic and Renaissance with hints of the Baroque. The artistic highlight is the late 18th-century **Gnadenaltar** (Mercy Altar) by Antonio Bossi – it is Baroque with some Classical elements.

Volkach

Volkach, a town of about 10,000, is at the bottom of the sharpest horseshoe bend of the Main. It has a beautiful natural location enhanced by the endless vineyards and romantic town panorama. Volkach's history goes back to 906. Originally, it belonged to the Abbacy of Fulda but from 1520 until secularization in 1803, it was part of the Bishopric of Würzburg.

Tourist Office

Tourist-Information und Kulturamt, Rathaus, 97332 Volkach, ☎ 09381-40-112, www.volkach.de.

Old Town

Sections of the original town wall and a few watchtowers survived, especially those facing the Main directly. Most of the sights in the Old Town are in Hauptstraße, which runs from the **Gaibacher Tor** parallel to the Main to **Oberes Tor** in the south. Both tower gates are in essence 13th-century but were modified during the 16th century.

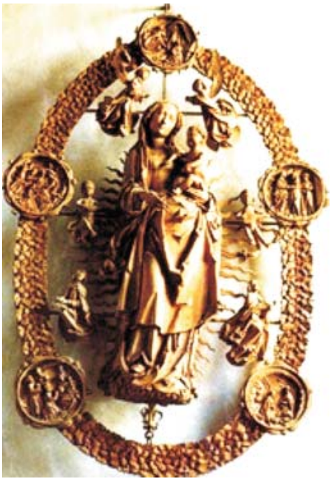
The Renaissance **Rathaus** (Town Hall) was completed in 1544. It has the typical external double staircase facing the Marktplatz. The nearby **Stadtpfarrkirche St Bartholomäus** (Parish Church) is mostly 15th-century but the 54-m/177-ft tower was completed in 1520. The interior has Renaissance, Baroque, and Rococo elements.

Volkach has many Renaissance and Baroque buildings to confirm that the 17th and 18th centuries were economically good for this town. The grandest house is the Baroque **Schelfenhaus** in Schelfengasse. This town palace was built for a wealthy trader in 1720.

St Maria im Weingarten

The main sight in Volkach apart from its lovely location is the pilgrim's church **St Maria im Weingarten** (St Mary's in the Vineyard). A pilgrim's road with paintings from 1520 leads about a km/half-mile from the Old Town through vineyards to the church on the Kirchberg, with wonderful views of the valley.

The 15th-century Late Gothic church is pretty enough and the location among the vineyards on a slight hill is appealing too. However, the main draw is the magnificently carved **Maria im Rosenkranz** (*Virgin with Rosary*) by Tilman Riemenschneider. He carved this Madonna, one of his last works, out of lime wood between 1521 and 1524. Opening hours are Monday to Saturday from 10 am to noon and 1:30 to 5 pm; Sunday and holidays from 9:30 am to noon and 1:30 to 6 pm. The church is closed from early December to the end of February. Admission is €1.


Maria im Rosenkranz

Gaibach

It is worth traveling the four km/2½ miles north to the small town of Gaibach to see works by two Baroque masters. Balthasar Neumann designed the single-nave **Pfarrkirche zur Heilige Dreifaltigkeit** (Parish Church of the Holy Trinity) completed in 1743. Its altar is by Antonio Bossi.

Prince Bishop Lothar Franz von Schönborn inherited the Renaissance moated **Gaibacher Schloss** from his father. Renaissance was not his style, so by 1710 he had the four-wing palace reworked in the more contemporary Baroque by master builder Johann Leonhard Dientzenhofer, who received some assistance from famed Viennese architect Lukas von Hildebrand. During the early 19th century, the moat was filled, an English landscape garden added, and the interior changed to a Classical style. The palace is currently used as school.

Schweinfurt

The former Free Imperial City of Schweinfurt is a thoroughly modern industrial city. The city of just over 50,000 was one of the first to industrialize during the 19th century and this was its undoing during the 20th century. The town became famous as a producer of paint and, more importantly, ball bearings. This made it an obvious target during World War II and virtually all historical buildings were destroyed by the end of the war. Economically, Schweinfurt recovered very fast as a supplier for the motor industry but, though some historic buildings have been rebuilt, the town is a far cry from the historical panoramas of other towns in the region. The main reasons to visit are therefore not to see the restored Rathaus, churches, or town defenses but rather to visit two excellent art museums.

Tourist Office

i **Tourist Information im Museum Georg Schäfer**, Brückenstraße 20, 97421 Schweinfurt, ☎ 09721-51-498, www.schweinfurt.de.

If traveling to Schweinfurt by local train, note that the Stadtbahnhof (500 m/0.3 mile) is closer to the Old Town than the Hauptbahnhof (2 km/1.2 mile).

Old Town

The large **Markt** (Market Square) is the heart of historic Schweinfurt. At its center is a memorial with a statue of the seated poet Friedrich Rückert (1788-1866). The most impressive building on the square is the **Rathaus** (Town Hall). It was originally erected in the1570s in a Renaissance style but with many Late Gothic elements. Its floor plan is a cross and the building is much larger than those in nearby towns, reflecting Schweinfurt's importance and strong position as a free imperial city, which is shown by the imperial double-headed eagle coat of arms on the oriel tower. Although the building was built in only 26

Rathaus (rouvy12)

months, it took the town more than four decades to pay the ensuing debts. The Rathaus escaped World War II with only minor damage.

To the north of the Markt, at Martin-Luther-Platz is the **Johanniskirche** (St John's), the oldest building in town. The earliest parts of the church are late 12th-century Romanesque but most of the building was completed in the Gothic style during the 14th and 15th centuries. The interior is surprisingly rich for a Protestant church but most of the statues date from before the Reformation. The chancel is Baroque and the high altar Classical, with a 20th-century painting.

Two blocks behind the Rathaus toward the Main is the main attraction in Schweinfurt, the **Museum Georg Schäfer**, Brückenstraße 20, ☎ 09721-51-917, www.museumgeorgschaefer.de. The museum opened in 2000 to house the largest private collection in the world of 19th-century German paintings, collected by local industrialist Georg Schäfer (1896-1975). The collection includes works from the late 18th to early 20th centuries, thus covering all styles from late Rococo, Classicism, and Romanticism to Impressionism and Secessionism. Works are displayed in chronological order, blending famous artists with lesser-known contemporaries. Conveniently for drivers, the museum building designed by Berlin architect Volker Staab, was built on top of a large underground parking lot. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 9 pm on Thursday. Admission is €6.

A few kilometers outside the Old Town in the suburb of Hochfeld is the **Museum Otto Schäfer**, Judithstraße 16, ☎ 09721-387-0970, www.museumottoschaefer.de. In contrast to his brother Georg's passion for paintings, Otto Schäfer (1912-2000) collected mostly books and prints. The Illustrata collection has 500 books from the 16th and 200 from the 15th century. The museum also houses various important collections of mostly German literature as well as 20th-century prints. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 2 to 5 pm, Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. The museum is closed from mid-July to mid-September and most of December. Admission is €3.

Cultural Events

In **Sommerhausen**, the cultural program can be hectic. The **Torturmtheater**, ☎ 09333-268, www.torturmtheater.de, is famous for staging first performances by contemporary dramatists. The **Theater Sommerhaus**, Katharinengasse 3, ☎ 09333-904-9867, www.theater-sommerhaus.de, stages mostly cabaret and satire. The **Historisches Theater**, Georg-Koberer Weg 4, ☎ 09333-902-427, www.kuenstlerinitiative-sommerhausen.de, puts on an annual program of theater and concerts in venues throughout the region.

Festivals

With the region named the Franconian Wine Land, it follows that there are lots of wine festivals. For most of summer and autumn, it seems as if there is at least one festival in each of the wine towns. The exact dates and places can be obtained from local tourist offices or from Tourismusverband Fränkisches Weinland. Wine festivals are a good opportunity to sample local culture and produce.

Wine Tasting

It would be a shame to tour this region without sampling some local wine. Unfortunately, very few vintners cater to individuals or groups of fewer than 10. However, it is worth enquiring from the local tourist offices – sometimes individuals are welcomed if arrangements are made in advance. The frequent wine festivals also present ample opportunities for sampling.

Local wine can, of course, be tried in any restaurant and is usually available by the glass. Many hotels and guesthouses own their own vineyards and may be willing to allow guests to sample a wide variety of their produce.

In Iphofen, local wines can be sampled by the glass in the **Vinothek**, Kirchplatz 7, ☎ 09323-870-317, www.vinothek.iphofen.de.

Adventures

On Foot

■ Countryside Hikes

The region is ideal for hiking, with many marked routes. Particularly popular is hiking between the wine villages in the section between Sommerhausen and Volkach. Any tourist office can provide information on advisable routes that can range from less than an hour to a full day. Routes next to the river, as well as higher up in the valley with spectacular views, are available.

Popular hikes include Sommerhausen to Würzburg through the vineyard-covered hills (around three hours). From Ochsenfurt it is a 30-minute hike to Frickenhausen, 90 minutes to Tückelhausen, and two hours to either Marktbreit or Sommerhausen. Hiking near Volkach to see the Mainschleife (Main horseshoe bend) is also popular.

On Wheels

By Bicycle

There are several cycling routes inland in addition to the obvious cycling opportunities along the Main. An interesting route is the 28-km/17-mile **Gaubahn Cycling Route** from Ochsenfurt on the Main to Bieberehren on the Tauber. It thus connects these two valleys with connections to the Romantic Road and Liebliches Taubertal cycling routes.

Bicycle rentals are available in **Sommerhausen** from **Fahrradverleih Proetzel**, Kreuzweg 1, ☎ 09333-8281; in **Ochsenfurt** from **Hotel Schmied**, Hauptstraße 26, ☎ 09331-2438; in **Frickenhausen** from **Adi Kleinschrod**, Am Sportplatz, ☎ 09331-1638; in **Iphofen** from **Zweirad Herrmann**, Bahnhofstraße 36, ☎ 09323-3331; in **Volkach** from **Zwei-Rad Weissenseel**, Im Seelein, ☎ 09381-3988; and in **Schweinfurt** from **Rennsport Hofmann**, Gabelsbergerstraße 2, ☎ 09721-24862.

On Water

Canoeing

Canoeing is possible on the Main from near Bayreuth all the way to its confluence with the Rhine at Mainz. However, no section of the river is prettier than the three horseshoe bends at Volkach. The sharpest bend has Volkach at the bottom of the U and is usually simply referred to as the **Mainschleife** (Main bow). A popular route is from Fahr at the north side of the Schleife to Volkach and continuing from here along the Altmain – the original flow of the Main, no longer used by shipping since the completion of the Main Canal – to the wine town Köhler.

Canoes can be rented from **Weingut-Pension Höhn**, Köhler 31, 97332 Volkach-Köhler, ☎ 09381-9253, www.weingut-hoehn-koehler, which can also arrange transport to the recommended start at Fahr.

Canoes and kayacks can also be rented from **Kanuladen Weimann**, Bamberger Straße 24, 97337 Dettelbach, ☎ 09324-99-844, and from **Wunder Kanu & Freizeit**, Am Zeughaus 24, 97421 Schweinfurt, ☎ 09721-23-569.

Riverboats

From early April to late October, **Fränkische Personen Schifffahrt**, ☎ 09321-91-810, www.mainschifffahrt.info, operates 90-minute cruises to view the Mainschleife at Volkach. Departures on weekdays are at 2 pm but more frequent on weekends.

During the Bavarian summer vacations, usually August to early September, **Schiffstouristik Würzburg**, ☎ 0931-51-313, www.schiffstouristik.de, has special cruises to the wine lands. On Sunday, the two-hour cruise is from Würzburg via Sommerhausen to Ochsenfurt and back; on Wednesday and Saturday, the cruise continues one hour farther upstream to Sulzfeld.

Where to Stay & Eat

Sommerhausen

The gourmet **Restaurant Philipp** (€€€) is one of the best in Unterfranken. It is on the Sommerhausen's main road in a restored half-timbered building. The food is mostly French and changes according to the season as only fresh produce is used. The décor is somewhat restrained, but stylish. With only five tables and 20 seats, reservations are advisable. Two upmarket suites and a double room are available for overnight guests. Haupstraße 12, 97286 Sommerhausen, ☎ 09333-1406, fax 09333-902-250, www.restaurant-philipp.de. (€€-€€€)

Ritter Jörg is a small, family-run hotel with comfortably furnished rooms – many with balconies. The rustic **restauran**t (€€) serves mostly regional cuisine and local wines. Maingasse 14, 97286 Sommerhausen, ☎ 09333-97-300, fax 09333-973-0320, www.ritter-joerg.de. (€€)

Ochsenfurt

Wald- und Sporthotel Polisina

Wald- und Sporthotel Polisina, just outside town en route to Marktbreidt, is one of the finest hotels in the region. Rooms are furnished in either a classical or country-house style. Bicycles can be rented on-site and green fees on a nearby course are discounted for guests. Hiking opportunities abound and a variety of spa facilities are available inside the hotel. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves local and international dishes. Marktbreiter Straße 265, 97199 Ochsenfurt, ☎ 09331-8440, fax 09331-7603, www.polisina.de. (€€€)

In town, appropriately inside a historic half-timbered house is the **Hotel zum Schmied**. Rooms are functionally furnished and some have exposed beams. The rustic **restaurant** (€€) serves unashamedly local cuisine. Haupstraße 26, 97199 Ochsenfurt, ☎ 09331-2438, fax 09331-20-203, www.hotel-schmied.de. (€€)

Sulzfeld

In a 15th-century half-timbered house is the family-run **Gasthof Zum Stern**. Rooms are functionally furnished with light wood furniture. Many rooms have exposed beams. The rustic **restaurant** (€€) serves local cuisine and wine produced by the hotel owners. Peuntgasse 5, 97320 Sulzfeld am Main, ☎ 09321-13-350, fax 09321-133-510, www.stern-sulzfeld.de. (€-€€)

Iphofen

The **Romantik Hotel Zehntkeller** is in a former official building of the Bishopric of Würzburg that oozes style and class. Rooms are stylishly furnished, with those in the Gartenhaus most comfortable. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves regional cuisine with a light touch as well as excellent owner-produced wines. Bahnhofstraße 12, 97346 Iphofen, ☎ 09323-8440, fax 09323-844-123, www.zehntkeller.de. (€€-€€€)

Huhn das Kleine Hotel is a modern hotel with only eight rooms – all comfortably and individually furnished to a high standard. Photos of all rooms can be seen on the website prior to reserving. Mainbernheimer Straße 10, 97346 Iphofen, ☎ 09323-1246, fax 09323-1076, www.kleines-hotel-huhn.iphofen.de. (€€)

Zur Iphöfer Kammer, Marktplatz 24, ☎ 09323-804-326, a small 28-seat restaurant, serves mostly regional cuisine with friendly service in the heart of town. (€€-€€€)

A pleasant alternative is the **Deutscher Hof**, Ludwigstraße 10, ☎ 09323-3348, which serves regional and international dishes. The rustic restaurant with fireplace is inside a half-timbered building. (€€)

Gasthaus zum Grünen Baum

Gasthof Grüner Baum

Dettelbach

The pleasant **Gasthof Grüner Baum** is in the heart of the Old Town. Rooms are functionally furnished – some are more comfortable than others. The **restaurant** (€€) has 500-year-old vaulting and is the ideal location for Franconian dishes.

Falterstraße 2, 97337 Dettelbach, ☎ 09324-97-230, fax 09324-972-333, gruenerbaum@dettelbach.de. (€-€€)

The gourmet **Restaurant Weingut Himmelstoss**, Bamberger Straße 3, ☎ 09324-4776, www.kuffer-herbert.de, serves mostly the chef's own creations accompanied by wine from the owner's vineyard. In summer, outdoor seating is available in the courtyard of the 17th-century winery building. (€€-€€€)

Volkach

Inside the Old Town, just north of the Oberes Tor, is the very pleasant **Romantik Hotel Zur Schwane** with a guesthouse tradition dating back to 1404. Rooms are stylish and comfortably furnished. The gourmet **restaurant** (€€€) with a lovely courtyard serves local dishes with a light touch and wine from the owners' own vineyard. Hauptstraße 12, 97332 Volkach, ☎ 09381-80-660, fax 09381-806-666, www.schwane.de. (€€-€€€)

Romantik Hotel Zur Schwane

The **Hotel Vier Jahreszeiten** is in the heart of the Old Town in a 1605 Renaissance building. Rooms are individually furnished, partly with antique furniture, and very comfortable. The **Sachs** (€€-€€€) uses fresh produce and is famous for its fish specialties. Hauptstrasse 31, 97332 Volkach, ☎ 09381-84-840, fax 09381-848-444, www.restaurant-sachs.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Hotel am Torturm** has a romantic, Old Town location but is a modern, cleanly designed establishment. Rooms are comfortable – it is worth paying the slight surcharge for a premium room but all have excellent, modern bathrooms. Hauptstraße 41, 97332 Volkach, ☎ 09381-80-670, fax 09381-806-744, www.hotel-am-torturm.de. (€€)

Hotel Behringer

Behind the lovely 400-year-old façade of the **Hotel Behringer**, adjacent to the Rathaus on the market square, are functionally furnished, modern rooms. Food in the **Ratherrnschänke** (€-€€) on the ground floor is hearty local cuisine, while seasonal specialties are served in the more stylish

Marktblickstube (€€) on the second floor. In the backyard are a beer garden and a petting zoo. Markplatz 5, 97332 Volkach, ☎ 09381-8140, fax 09381-814-299, www.hotel-behringer.de. (€€)

Youth Hostels

Jugendherberge der Stadt Schweinfurt is a different kind of hostel. It is used as a training center for the hospitality industry. Apprentices make the beds and clean the rooms. They also serve and cook meals in the restaurant. The hostel is about five minutes hike from the Old Town. It is closed for three weeks over Christmas and New Years. Niederwerrner Straße 17½, 97421 Schweinfurt, ☎ 09721-21-404, fax 09721-23-581, www.jugendherberge-schweinfurt.de.

The **DJH Ochsenfurt** is located inside the 300-year-old Klingentor, with lovely views of the Old Town and the Main. It is open from mid-April to mid-October. Hauptstraße 1, 97199 Ochsenfurt, ☎ 09331-2666, fax 09331-2696.

Camping

Campingplatz-Ankergrund is only a five-minute walk from the Old Town of Volkach. It has very good facilities and 120 lots, open from April to late October. 97332 Volkach, ☎ 09381-6713, fax 09381-4114, www.campingplatz-ankerkreuz.de.

Nearby is **Camping Katzenkopf am See**, on the banks of the Main between two lakes. It has very good facilities and around 250 lots, open from April to mid-September. 97334 Sommerach am Main, ☎ 09381-9215, fax 09381-6028.

Knaus Campingpark has simpler facilities just outside the small hamlet of Frickenhausen near Ochsenfurt. It has around 200 lots and is open from December to October. 97252 Frickenhausen, ☎ 09331-3171, fax 09331-5784, www.knauscamp.de.

Mittelfranken

IN THIS CHAPTER

- **Romantic Road** 381
  - **Rothenburg to Dinkelsbühl** 383
  - **South of Rothenburg** 393

Mittelfranken (Middle Franconia) largely consists of areas that were formerly part of the Duchy of Brandenburg-Ansbach, as well as several free imperial cities, including Nürnberg and Rothenburg ob der Tauber, and areas controlled by the Teutonic Order.

The Romantic Road, a vacation route, runs through the western parts of this region and has some of the most popular and romantic sights in Bavaria. Walled-in Rothenburg ob der Tauber is one of the most popular destinations in Germany and, though often overrun by tourists, is still worth the journey.

The largest city in Mittelfranken, and indeed all of Franken, is Nürnberg. Due to its size and importance, it is described in a separate section.

Romantische Straße (Romantic Road)

The Romantische Straße is one of Germany's oldest and most popular vacation routes. It follows backroads in the western parts of Bavaria from Würzburg on the Main to Füssen at the foot of the Bavaria Alps. En route, it passes romantic towns, hamlets, castles, and churches. The road was created as a commercial venture in the mid-20th century and, although some of the most romantic scenes in Germany are on the road, some equally romantic ones are not. Bavaria has numer-

Rothenburg ob der Tauber

ous other romantic towns and Franken, with its numerous half-timbered, medieval-look buildings, has especially rich pickings.

Würzburg, the start of the road, is described in the *Unterfranken* section, while the southern half of the route is covered in the *Allgäu & Bayerisch-Schwaben* chapter. The most popular sights on the road are the walled-in town of **Rothenburg ob der Tauber**, the Rococo masterpiece **Wieskirche**, and the fairy-tale castle **Schloss Neuschwanstein**.

Information Sources

For information on the Romantic Road, contact Touristik-Arbeitsgemeinschaft Romantische Straße, Waaggässlein1, 91550 Dinkelsbühl, ☎ 09851-90-271, www.romantischestrasse.de, or any tourist information office en route.

Getting Around

The 350 km/220 miles of the route can easily be driven in less than a day, but the time required depends on the number of stopovers made along the way. The route uses mostly backroads, but much faster parallel highways are sometimes available to make up time. Tourist offices have free maps of the road, which is handy, as the route is not generally marked with signboards. However, do note the Japanese signboards as testimony to the international appeal of this road!

From April to October, **Deutsche Touring**, Am Römerhof 17, 60486 Frankfurt, ☎ 069-790-350, www.deutsche-touring.com, operates daily buses departing from Frankfurt (or Füssen) at 8 am, running the full route and arriving in Füssen (or Frankfurt) at 8 pm. Stopovers are permitted en route and a 90-minute break in Rothenburg is included. Reservations (free) are recommended, especially during the high season. Bicycles may be taken on the bus but three days prior reservations are required.

Rail services are available to some of the towns, but they do not run along the route itself. Würzburg and Augsburg are major stops on high-speed networks, while Rothenburg, Bad-Mergentheim, Tauberbischofsheim, Donauwörth, Landshut, Schongau, and Füssen can also be reached by rail. Local bus services are also available between many towns but these are not continuous and there are some gaps in the schedules, especially on weekends and during school holidays.

CYCLING THE ROMANTIC ROAD

Tourismusverband Ammersee-Lech, Kohlstattstraße 8, 86899 Landsberg am Lech, ☎ 08191-47-177, www.radler-paradies.de, arranges nine-day tours along the full length of the route from Würzburg to Füssen. The tours include rental bicycles, accommodations, luggage transportation, and maps.

Rothenburg to Dinkelsbühl

For many, the highlight of the Romantic Road, and indeed of Germany, is the medieval Rothenburg ob der Tauber. From here, the Romantic Road follows minor country roads south to Dinkelsbühl via Schillingsfürst and Feuchtwangen. All four towns are part of the Romantische Franken tourism region. Farther south, the Romantic Road enters Bavarian Swabia – see the *Allgäu* chapter.

Getting Around

A private car makes traveling in this area much easier, with the added convenience that brief stopovers are possible. Although the Romantic Road follows minor country roads, all four towns are less than 10 km/six miles from the Autobahn A7. From Rothenburg to Dinkelsbühl is around 50 km/30 miles.

Rothenburg ob der Tauber can be reached by frequent trains, always requiring a transfer at Steinach, from where fast connections are available to Würzburg. Rothenburg to Dinkelsbühl by public transportation requires multiple changes and at least two hours traveling time – a major hassle is the absence of connections between Schillingfürst and Feuchtwangen other than the daily Europa Bus. Bus 807 connects Rothenburg and Schillingsfürst in a half-hour, running a few times on most days. A few buses per day connect Feuchtwangen and Dinkelsbühl in 20 minutes.

Rothenburg ob der Tauber

This is a medieval walled town in an excellent state of repair. It has a population of 12,000 but around 2½ million day-trippers visit annually and just under half a million spend the night. It certainly is not the only medieval walled town in Germany but none is as attractive, or as popular. In the high season it is best to arrive in the afternoon, spend the night, and leave before lunch to avoid the crowds.

Rothenburg was founded in the 12th century and became a Free Imperial City in 1274. Around 1400, Rothenburg was at the peak of its power and, with 6,000 inhabitants, one of the largest cities in the empire. Decline started in the 16th century and was hastened when it adopted the Reformation. It was occupied several times during the Thirty Years' War. Thereafter, the town was generally too poor to rebuild in the latest styles, so most of it remained in a 16th-century time warp. It became part of Bavaria in 1802 and by the end of the 19th century was discovered by tourists. During World War II, aerial bombardments destroyed about 40% of the town, but most buildings were restored.

Information Sources

The **tourist information office** is at Marktplatz 2, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-40-492, www.rothenburg.de.

Getting Around

Rothenburg is close to the Autobahn A7 and can be reached on the Europa Bus from Frankfurt. By train it is just over an hour from Würzburg (change at Steinach) or between one and two hours from Nürnberg (change at Ansbach and Steinach). The station is about 10 minutes walk east of the Old Town.

Once at Rothenburg, walking is the only option. Street-side parking is scarce and time-restricted. Large, well-marked parking lots are outside the walls. Most of the Old Town is closed to cars on weekdays from 11 am to 4 pm and from 7 pm to 5 am. All of it is closed to traffic on weekends – drivers with hotel reservations may enter through Galgentor.

Sightseeing

The main attraction of Rothenburg is its medieval atmosphere and the magnificent fortifications. Large sections of the wall may be explored at will. The tourist information office and most hotels have free maps with suggested walking routes to see the town from its most picturesque angles. Apart from St Jakob and the Criminal Museum, indoor attractions are best reserved for very rainy days.

The **Markt** is a large square in the center of the Old Town. The Gothic parts of the **Rathaus** (Town Hall) date from the 14th century and the Renaissance additions are late 16th century. The 60-m/197-ft tower offers the best views in town. Opening hours are daily from April to October, 9:30 am to 12:30 pm. From November to March, it is open on weekends only from noon to 3 pm, but daily during December. Admission is €1.

To the north is the former **Ratstrinkstube** (City Councilors' Tavern), formerly open to council members only. It has several clocks, including a carillon that recalls the Meistertrunk legend daily (see below) on the hour between 11 am and 3 pm and between 8 and 10 pm.

THE MEISTERTRUNK LEGEND

Rothenburg's most famous moment came during the Thirty Years' War when General Tilly threatened to destroy the town. According to legend, all pleas were rejected until the general was served the best local wine. He offered to spare the town if a burgher could drink a hanap (3¼ liters/six pints) in a single gulp. A certain Nusch, a former burgomaster, came forward and achieved the feat. This event is commemorated annually during the Pentecost weekend with an open-air play on the market square. (Historians generally agree that, in reality, it was a bag of cash that changed the general's mind.)

The **Historiengewölbe** (Historical Vaults), Rathaus, Lichthof, ☎ 09861-86751, are in the basement of the Rathaus. There is a not particularly impressive exhibition relating mostly to the Thirty Years' War. Also on display is the Verlies (cell) where former Burgomaster Heinrich Toppler was incarcerated for two months and eventually executed in 1408. Opening hours are daily from April to October 9:30 am to 5:30 pm, and during the Christmas market from 1 to 4 pm. Admission is €4.

BURGOMASTER HEINRICH TOPPLER

From 1373 until his execution in 1408, Heinrich Toppler served on the Rothenburg town council and for most of his final 25 years was Burgomaster (mayor). Under his able reign, Rothenburg reached the peak of its power. It became the second-largest Free Imperial City in the Empire and controlled 167 towns in the region. Much of the expansion of the town's influence was due to the friendship between Toppler and King Wenzel. When Wenzel fell from power, Toppler maintained diplomatic contacts with him and as a result, the whole town received the *Reichsacht* (being outlawed). The burgrave of Nürnberg attacked the town and Toppler's enemies blamed him for Rothenburg's devastating defeat. His considerable service to the town was forgotten and on June 13, 1408, he was executed in the vaults below the Rathaus.

Käthe Wohlfahrt's Christmas ornament shops seem to be everywhere in Rothenburg, but a more historic approach is in the **Deutsches Weihnachtsmuseum** (German Christmas Museum), Herrngasse 1, ☎ 09861-409-365, www.weihnachtsmuseum.de. It is in the back of the main Käthe Wohlfahrt shop and has a huge exhibition of historic Christmas ornaments, mostly from the late 19th century. Opening hours are daily from 10 am to 5:30 pm, but closed on Sunday from January to April. Admission is €4.

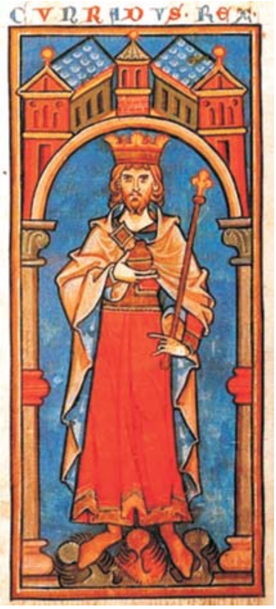
The **St Jakobs-Kirche** (St James' Church) is a triple-nave Gothic basilica. Construction of the east chancel started in 1311, the nave was completed in 1436, and the west chancel built in 1450-71, with a passageway underneath. The church has several remarkable art treasures from the 15th and 16th centuries. None is more impressive than Tilman Riemenschneider's **Heilig-Blut Altar** (Holy Blood Altar) carved between 1499 and 1505. Its main panel shows the *Last Supper*. Opening hours are daily from April to October from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm, December from 10 am to 5 pm, November and January to March from 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm. Admission is €1.50.

St Wolfgangskirche (St Wolfgang's Church), Beim Klingentor, is an interesting 15th-century church in unaltered state just outside the Klingentor (Town Gate). The church itself actually forms part of the town defenses – note the casemates and parapet walk. Opening hours are daily from March to October from 11 am to 1 pm and 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €1.50.

Rothenburg town walls

The **Reichsstadtmuseum** (Imperial City Museum), Klosterhof 5, ☎ 09861-939-043, is in a former Dominican monastery. It has mostly exhibits on furniture, weapons, sculpture and the former 14th-century convent kitchen. Opening hours are daily from April to October, 10 am to 5 pm and from November to March, 1 to 4 pm. Admission is €3.

The **Burggarten** (Castle Garden) and **Burg Tor** (Castle Gate) are at the cradle of Rothenburg. It was here that King Konrad III erected an Imperial Palace in the mid-12th century from where he ruled the empire. In 1356, a strong earthquake destroyed the castle and much of the town that had developed around it. The town rebuilt and by 1400 was



Konrad III

one of the 10 largest in the Holy Roman Empire. All that remains of the castle is the **Blasiuskapelle** (Blasuis Chapel), now a monument for soldiers who died in both world wars. After entering the neatly maintained park through the Burg Tor, the highest gate tower in town, note the opening for pouring pitch through a mask above the gate. The garden offers lovely views of the Tauber Valley and makes it clears why the town is named “ob der Tauber” (above the Tauber) – the river is in a valley 80 m/262 ft below the town walls. Note the Doppelbrücke (Double Bridge). Although it resembles a Roman aqueduct, it is 14th-century.

Also visible from the garden is the odd-looking **Topplerschlösschen**, Taubertalweg 100, ☎ 09861-7358. It is a stubby 14th-century tower with a larger, white set of apartments built on top. It was used as a weekend retreat by a famous mayor, Heinrich Toppler. The not particularly interesting interior can be seen from December to October; Friday to Sunday from 1 to 4 pm. Admission is €1.50. It is a 30-minute walk from the Burggarten.

Return to the Old Town and follow **Herrngasse**, the grandest street in town, with several patrician houses. The **Franziskanerkirche**, Herrngasse, ☎ 09861-700620, is Rothenburg’s oldest church. It dates from 1285 and is mostly early Gothic. The main sight is the altar by Tilman Riemenschneider, although clearly of lesser artistic merit than the one in St Jacob. Opening hours are daily from February to December from 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm. Admission is free.

Nearby is the **Puppen- und Spielzeugmuseum** (Doll and Toy Museum), Hofbronnengasse 13, ☎ 09861-7330. It has a collection of some 800 German and French dolls, mostly from 1780 to 1940, exhibited together with related toys and dolls’ houses. The museum shop sells copies of old-fashioned toys and books. Opening hours are daily from March to December, 9:30 am to 6 pm, and in January and February from 11 am to 5 pm. Admission is €4.

Many German towns and castles have a torture museum, but the **Mittelalterliches Kriminalmuseum** (Medieval Crime Museum), Burggasse 3-5, ☎ 09861-5359, approaches the subject more seriously and more thoroughly. It is a large display on the development of justice in Europe up to the 19th century. The instruments of torture obviously attract the most attention, but the illustrated law books and explanations of procedures are also interesting. All descriptions are in English. Opening hours are daily from April to October, 9:30 am to 6 pm, November and January to March, 2 to 4 pm, and December from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €3.20.

Farther south, down Schmiedgasse, is the **Plönlein** – a small triangular square where the road splits. Many consider this the most romantic scene in Germany. If time is not pressing, do not follow the larger road through the tall Siebersturm (tower) directly to the Spitalbastei,

GOLDENER HIRSCH

The Plönlein

but rather go downhill on the smaller road and through the 14th-century **Kobolzeller Tor** (gate). It is possible to walk on the wall from here to the south of the town.

Approach to the Kobolzeller Tor

At the southern reaches of the town are several impressive buildings that once belonged to the **Spital** (Hospice). One now houses a very popular youth hostel. The mightiest of Rothenburg's town gates is the **Spitalbastei** (Hospice Bastion) with a series of gates and protective walls. It has two large oval courtyards and seven gates to verify visitors before the town itself is entered. Most of it was constructed in the 17th century.

The eastern part of the town was destroyed during World War II. If walking along the sentries walk here – ascend close to the Plönlein – small plaques indicate the names of people who sponsored the reconstruction of the walls. It is possible to walk from here on the wall past the Rödertor and Galgentor to the Klingenbastei in the far northwest of the Old Town but the views are generally less spectacular than those on the south-

The Röderturm

western, riverside part of the town. The 13th-century **Röderturm** (Tower Gate) is the only gate tower that can be ascended. In the half-timbered building at its top is a small exhibition on the destruction of the town in 1945 and the views are, not surprisingly, fantastic. It is open daily from March to late December from 9 am to 6 pm. Admission is €2 – queues are usually shorter than for the Rathausturm.

From here, follow Rödergasse back to the Markt. En route is the romantic 12th-century **Markusturm** (Mark Tower), which marks the eastern edge of the original town. Just before this tower, is the **Alt-Rothenburger Handwerkerhaus**, Alter Stadtgraben 26, ☎ 09861-94280, www.alt-rothenburger-handwerkerhaus.de. In this large 13th-century house, considered the oldest in town, an 11-room museum illustrates how an extended family of skilled manual workers lived and worked from the Middle Ages up to the 19th century. Note the low ceilings – people in the Middle Ages were seldom over 1.5 m/five ft tall. Opening hours are daily from Easter to October from 11 am to 5 pm, opening at 10 am on weekends, and 2 to 4 pm from first Advent to January 7. Admission is €2.20.

■ Farther Afield

The oldest part of modern-day Rothenburg is the small community of **Detwang**, a pleasant two-km/1.2-mile stroll along the Tauber River north of the Klingentor. The village was founded in the 10th century and came under Rothenburg's control during the 13th century. The main sight is the late 12th-century Romanesque church, **St.-Peter-und-Paul-Kirche**, Ortsteil Detwang, ☎ 09861-5524, with a Gothic interior. It has a fine wooden Holy Cross Altar with the main crucifixion panel carved by Tilman Riemenschneider. The two side wings are from his studio but clearly by a lesser talent. Also worth seeing is the 11th-century cross-reliquary and the Gothic tabernacle. Opening hours are from April to October daily 8:30 am to noon and 1:30 to 5 pm, from November to March Tuesday to Sunday from 10 ym to noon and 2 to 4 pm. Admission is €1.

Cultural Events

The St Jakobskirche and Franziskanerkirche are frequent venues for musical concerts, www.kirchenmusik.rothenburg.de. Reservations can be made at the tourist information office.

Festivals

Rothenburg has three major annual festivals on the Markt – the exact dates are available from the tourist information office. The **Meistertrunk Festpiel** (Master Draught Play) in June recalls the events during the Thirty Years' War. The **Reichsstadt Festtage** (Imperial City Festival) in September is accompanied by theatrical performances, traditional dancing, and fireworks. The **Reiterlesmarkt** in December is a small Christmas market but with arguably the most romantic setting in all of Germany.

Shopping

Käthe Wohlfahrt has Europe's largest Christmas ornament business. They have several shops in Rothenburg, the main one at Herrngasse 1, ☎ 09861-4090, www.wohlfahrt.com. It is Christmas here all year. Prices are high but so is the quality of the products. A small outlet shop for discontinued and slightly damaged goods is across the road from the St Jakobskirche at the corner of Kirchgasse. Ignore all the shops claiming cheap Christmas decorations in the immediate vicinity – it is the low-key nameless one with just a small "Schnäppchenmarkt/Discount Store" sign. The name Käthe Wohlfahrt is not displayed, except when the goods are finally packed into the normal Wohlfahrt bags.

Kindertrau

Käthe Wohlfahrt shop (Galen Frysinger)

Adventures on Foot

■ Town Walks

English guided walking tours of the Old Town area are conducted by the tourist information office daily between April and October at 2 pm and with the night watchman at 8 pm.

■ Countryside Hikes

The Tauber Valley is a popular hiking area. The tourist information office has details on more than 10 walks starting from the Markt into the nearby countryside, ranging from two to five hours. Hiking maps are available for the tourist office or any bookstore. On

Wednesday at 2 pm, a *Wandern & Singen* (Walking & Singing) tour starts from the Markt to the surrounding countryside.

Jogging

Joggers meet Saturday at 4:30 pm in the Waldparkplatz Aidenau parking area for a cross-country run.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

The Tauber Valley is a popular cycling area – the tourist office has maps on cycling routes. Very popular are multi-day cycling tours along the Romantic Road.

Bicycles can be rented from **Rat & Tat**, Bensenstraße 17, ☎ 09861-87-984, or from **Skazel**, Rad und Freizeittouristik, Am Stadtschreiber 27, ☎ 09341-5395.

Adventures in the Air

Hot-Air Ballooning

Happy Ballooning, Paradiesgasse 17, ☎ 09861-87-888, www.happy-ballooning.de, has late-afternoon flights starting directly south of Rothenburg.

Where to Stay & Eat

The **Eisenhut Hotel** is the best temporary address in town. It is in four 15th-century patrician houses at the Markt. Rooms are very comfortable and individually furnished to a high standard. The **restaurant** (€€- €€€), with wall paintings and ample use of wood, serves international dishes and local specialties. Herrngasse 3, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-7050, fax 09861-70-545, www.eisenhut.com. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Romantik Hotel Markusturm** is in a former customs house with a history going back to 1264. The hotel has been run by the same family for four generations and has large, very comfortable, individually furnished rooms. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves local specialties accompanied by local wine. Rödergasse 1, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-94-280, fax 09861-942-8113, www.markusturm.de. (iii-iiii)

Eisenhut Hotel

The **Burghotel** is in a quiet spot by the town wall near St Jakobs-Kirche. Rooms are well appointed and furnished with good taste and attention to detail. Breakfast can be enjoyed on the town wall itself when weather allows. Klostergasse 1-3, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-94-890, fax 09861-948-940, www.burghotel.rothenburg.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Tilman Riemenschneider Hotel** is in a romantic half-timbered building. Rooms are comfortable, mostly with hand-painted country-style furniture. The rustic **restaurants** (€€-€€€) in the complex serve mainly local cuisine. Georgengasse 11-13, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-9790, fax 09861-2979, www.tilman-riemenschneider.de. (€€-€€€€)

Tilman Riemenschneider Hotel

The **Gerberhaus Hotel** is in the southern part of the Old Town close to the Spitaltor. It is a very pleasant place, with bright, comfortable rooms. Spitalgasse 25, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-94-900, fax 09861-86-555, www.romantic-road.com/gerberhaus. (€€)

Nearby is the pleasant **Flair Hotel Reichs-Küchenmeister** in an old patrician house. Rooms are individually furnished and of different styles and sizes. Kirchplatz 8, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-9700, fax 09861-970-409, www.reichskuechenmeister.com. (€€-€€€)

A very good choice just outside the town walls is the **Hotel Mittermeier**. Rooms are comfortably furnished and available in different styles. The **restaurant** (€€-€€€€) is one of the best in the region and serves international and local nouvelle cuisine. Am Würzburger Tor 9, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-94-540, fax 09861-945-494, www.mittermeier.rothenburg.de. (€€-€€€)

Just outside the city gates is **Hotel Zum Rappen**. It has individually furnished rooms. The restaurant (€-€€) serves hearty local cuisine. Am Würzburger Tor, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-95-710, fax 09861-6076, www.hotel-rappen.com. (€€)

The small **Hotel Klosterstüble** is near the Franziskaner-Kirche. It has individually furnished rooms; some are partly wood-paneled in the Alpine tradition. It is very welcoming toward families with young children. The restaurant (€€) serves local cuisine. Heringsbronnengasse 5, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-6774, fax 09861-6474, www.klosterstueble.de. (€€)

At the Markt are two lovely restaurants. A pleasant place for coffee and cake, or full meals, is the **Baumeisterhaus Restaurant**, Obere Schmiedgasse 3, ☎ 09861-94-700. It is inside a 1596 Renaissance house with courtyard, wall paintings, and antique decorations. A rustic spot, it serves excellent cakes and local dishes. The adjacent **Zum Greifen Restaurant**, Obere Schmiedgassse 5, ☎ 09861-2281, has hearty local cuisine. (€-€€)

Youth Hostel

Rothenburg's popular **Jugendherberge Rossmühle und Spitalhof** is located in two historic buildings at the south of the Old Town just inside the Spitaltor. The Rossmühle is an early 16th-century mill that was operated by 16 horses. It has excellent facilities and reservations far in advance are often required. It usually closes for a few days over Christmas and New Year. Mühlacker 1, 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber, ☎ 09861-94-160, fax 09861-941-620.

Camping

Camping Tauber-Idyll is 1.2 miles outside the walled town. It has very good facilities, but only 40 lots, and is open from early April to early November. 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber-Detwang, ☎ 09861-3177, fax 09861-92-848.

Camping Tauberromantik is also about 1.2 miles outside Rothenburg in the Tauber valley. It has very good facilities and 120 lots. It is open from mid-March to October. 91541 Rothenburg ob der Tauber-Detwang, ☎ 09861-6191, fax 09861-86-899, www.camping-tauberromantik.de.

South of Rothenburg

Schillingsfürst

Tourist Office

Info-Center (Verkehrsamt), Rothenburger Straße 2, 91583 Schillingsfürst, ☎ 09868-222, www.schillingsfuerst.de.

Sightseeing

The main sight in Schillingsfürst is **Schloss Schillingsfürst** (Palace), Am Wall 14, ☎ 09868-201, www.schloss-schillingsfuerst.de, which is still partly inhabited by the count of Hohenlohe-Schillingsfürst. The glamorous Spanish Baroque palace replaced the former castle that was destroyed during the Thirty Years' War. Set on a hill, it can be seen from afar. The interior is suitably grand and the museum has exhibitions on the Wilhelmian era when Imperial Chancellor Fürst Clodwig (1894-1900) lived here. The palace is open daily from the end of March to the end

Schloss Schillingsfürst

October with the compulsory tours starting at 10 am, noon, 2, and 4 pm. Admission is €4 (or €7 for the Jagdfalkenhof as well).

On the same premises is the **Bayerischer Jagdfalkenhof** (Bavarian Falconry), ☎ 09868-6941, www.bayerischer-jagdfalkenhof.de, with eagles, falcons, vultures, and samples of virtually all species of European birds of prey. Opening hours are daily from March to October from 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 6 pm from May to August. Flight demonstrations are daily at 11 am and 3 pm, additionally at 5 pm on Sunday from May to August. Admission is €7.

In town, around a mile from the palace, is the **Brunnenhausmuseum** (Pump Station Museum), Brunnenhausweg, ☎ 09868-5889. Its main exhibit is a piece of early 18th-century technology. Here, the weight of an ox operated a water pump that pumped around 40 liter/10 gallons of water per minute uphill to the palace. Further exhibitions focus on traditional life during the 18th and 19th centuries. Opening hours are April to October, Tuesday to Friday from 9:30 am to noon and 2:30 to 7 pm, weekends from 1 to 6 pm. Admission is €2.50.

Feuchtwangen

Feuchtwangen's history dates back to a Benedictine monastery founded in Carolingian times. In 1241, it became a free imperial city. However, in 1376, after the emperor mortgaged the town and the town was unable to pay the 5,000 guilders, it fell to the burgrave of Nürnberg and later margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach. In 1806, it became part of Bavaria.

Tourist Office

Tourist Information, Marktplatz 1, 91555 Feuchtwangen, ☎ 09852-90-455, www.feuchtwangen.de.

Sightseeing

Feuchtwangen is often overlooked by travelers en route to the more famous Rothenburg and Dinkelsbühl even though it has a very pretty Old Town. Its **Marktplatz** (Markt Square) is sometimes referred to as the Banquet Hall of Franconia as it is lined with stately, high buildings. The **Röhrenbrunnen** (1727), with a statue of Minerva, has at its base several coats of arms of entities associated with the town.

Feuchtwangen's Kreuzgang

A flight of stairs from the south of the square leads to the 12th-century Romanesque **Kreuzgang** (Cloisters), the highlight of any visit to Feuchtwangen. The two surviving wings of the cloisters are in an excellent state of repair and the stage for the annual prestigious play festival. The half-timbered constructions on top of the Romanesque pillars of the west wing were added in the 18th century.

The cloisters once belonged to the adjacent **Stiftkirche** (Collegiate Church) but the monastery was disbanded in 1563 after the town turned Protestant. The church is partly Romanesque but with strong 14th-century Gothic accents. The interior is mostly 17th-century Baroque but the most impressive art works are from the 15th century: the choir stalls and the Mary Altar by Michael Wolgemut, the teacher of Albrecht Dürer.

The adjacent **Johanniskirche** (St John's) was built around 1400 and the vault paintings are original. The Baroque altar was completed in 1680 but the surrounding statues and baptismal font are two centuries older.

Two blocks north of the market square is the **Fränkisches Museum**, Museumsstraße 19, ☎ 09852-2575, www.fraenkisches-museum.de, one of the most important folk art museums in Franken. It illustrates life in the region from the Baroque to the early 20th century. It also has a 700-piece faience collection, folk arts, and crafts. Opening hours are March to December from Wednesday to Sunday, 2 to 5 pm, opening at 11 am from May to September. Admission is €2.

THE AUTOBAHN CASINO

As if legally blasting down the Autobahn at top speed is not exhilarating enough, the Bavarian state recently opened the **Spielbank Feuchtwangen**, Am Casino 1, ☎ 09852-90-060, www.spielbanken-bayern.de. Perched right next to the highway like a gas station, it was soon dubbed the Autobahn Casino. This modern glass and steel building has none of the prestige or glamorous tradition of the 19th-century casinos but still requires jackets and ties (available at reception). The tables are open daily 3 pm to 3 am and the slot machines from noon to 2 am. Admission to the tables is €2.50 and €0.50 to the slot machines. Minimum age for both is 21.

Dinkelsbühl

Dinkelbühl is for many an alternative to overcrowded Rothenburg. Like Rothenburg, it is entirely surrounded by a town wall and most of the Old Town buildings date from before the 16th century.

Dinkelsbühl developed out of an imperial farm that was established here during the eighth century. It became a free imperial city in 1274 and up to the late Middle Ages played a major role in the cloth industry. It accepted the Lutheran Reformation and, although most inhabitants remained Protestant, Kaiser Karl V gave special privileges to the Roman Catholic minority – religious differences remained unsettled until well into the 18th century. During the Thirty Years' War, the town changed hands eight times but avoided complete plunder and destruction.

After this war, Dinkelsbühl remained a free imperial city until the Napoleonic era but never recovered its wealth. It was too poor to remodel houses in more contemporary styles. Tourism started to play a major role in the local economy during the 19th century and, since the mid-20th century, Dinkelsbühl has been a firm favorite on any trip to the Romantic Road.

Tourist Office

Touristik Service Dinkelbühl, Marktplatz, 91550 Dinkelsbühl, ☎ 09851-90-240, www.dinkelsbuehl.de.

Most of the Old Town is closed to private vehicles – large parking areas are on the edges of the Old Town.

Sightseeing

Dinkelsbühl was spared the destruction of major wars and its town wall, four town gates, and 18 watchtowers are still intact. Since 1826, the town defenses have been under preservation order. The town walls are lower and much thinner than those of Rothenburg and, although it is possible to walk around the town, it is not actually possible to walk on the walls.

Since most visitors have to park outside the town walls, a good way to start sightseeing is by taking the 2½-km/1½-mile walk around the town. At the east is the Staufen-era **Wörnitz Tor** (gate) – its higher levels are Renaissance. At the north is the late 14th-century **Rothenburger Tor** with prison cells and torture chamber. Nearby is the **Faulturm** (tower), which is one of the most romantic views of the town. The **Segringer Tor** was damaged in 1648 and the Baroque replacement is clearly the newest of the four town gates. At the south of the town are the **Nördlinger Tor** and the **Stadtmühle** (Town Mill), both from around 1400. As the mill was outside the town wall, it received fortress-like protective walls. Also, note the nearby

Dinkelsbühl

Bäuerlinsturm, a watchtower with a romantic, 16th-century, half-timbered upper story.

The **Weinmarkt** and **Marktplatz** directly in front of the Minster are the most beautiful parts of the town. There are several large, half-timbered houses, including the 16th-century Late Renaissance **Deutsches Haus**. **Segringer Straße**, that leads westward from the square, also has particularly beautiful buildings – the **Hezelhof** has a 16th-century courtyard with three stories of wooden galleries.

The **Münster St Georg** is one of the most beautiful hall churches in southern Germany. The church has a 65-m/213-ft-high Romanesque tower (1230), but most of the rest of the building and interior is 15th-century Gothic. Note the statues of *The Last Supper* on the outside wall of the choir. Inside, the church is filled with art, with the late 15th-century tabernacle of the sacristy and the high altar especially noteworthy. Opening hours are daily from 9 am to noon and 2 to 7 pm, closing at 5 pm from November to April. The tower can be climbed for fantastic views on weekends from May to October between 2 and 5 pm. Admission is €2.

Near the Rothenburger Tor is the **Spital** (hospice) – it was begun in 1280 but most of the surviving buildings are from the 15th and 16th century. The church is from 1380 but the interior is Baroque. The building now houses the **Historisches Museum** (Local History), Dr.-Martin-Luther-Straße 6b, ☎ 09851-3293, www.freie-reichsstadt.de. It has the usual collection of models, paintings, furniture, and, inevitably, torture implements that no local history museum in Romantische Franken can do without. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €3.

A surprisingly interesting museum on a surprisingly modern theme in this historic Old Town is the **Museum 3. Dimension** (3-D Museum), Am Nördlinger Tor, ☎ 09851-6336, www.3d-museum.de. It is a private collection with exhibitions and demonstrations on everything related to 3-D and optical illusions. Opening hours are April to September daily from 10 am to 6 pm, October daily from 11 am to 4 pm, and January to March on weekends from 11 am to 4 pm. Admission is a rather steep €8.

Cultural Events

The **Feuchtwang Kreuzgangspiele** (Cloister Plays), www.kreuzgangspiele.de, is a prestigious annual theater series held in the cloisters in Feuchtwangen from the end of May to early August. Information and tickets are available through the tourist office.

According to legend, in 1632, Dinkelsbühl was spared from assured destruction when a delegation of town children pled for mercy and the Swedish army took pity on them. This "event" gave rise to the annual **Kinderzeche**, www.kinderzeche.de – a festival held in mid-July that combines a play of the event as well as parades, concerts, and a folk festival.

Adventures on Foot

■ Town Walks

The tourist office in **Feuchtwangen** conducts guided tours from April to September at 4 pm each Sunday and from end May to mid-August also on Saturday at 5 pm.

Guided tours of the Old Town are conducted by the **Dinkelsbühl** information office daily from April to October at 2:30 and 8:30 pm. A walk with the night watchman is possible daily during the same period at 9 pm. Longer walks into the countryside are also arranged on a less regular basis.

Adventures on Wheels

■ By Bicycle

Bicycle rentals are available in **Feuchtwangen** from **Bräulein Sporthaus**, Marktplatz 11, ☎ 09852-2358.

The **Dinkelsbühl tourism office** rents out bicycles and arranges half-day guided cycling tours in the region.

Where to Stay

■ Schillingsfürst

Die Post is a family-run hotel in a former stagecoach stop. Bedrooms are modern and comfortable; some have views of the Schloss and Tauber Valley. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves local cuisine, including carp from the hotel's own farm and self-distilled spirits. Rothenburger Straße 1, 91583 Schillingsfürst, ☎ 09868-9500, fax 09868-950-250, www.rothenburg.de/hotel-post. (€€)

■ Feuchtwangen

The 600-year-old **Romantik Hotel Greifen-Post** is a great place to stay and eat. It has 40 rooms in four different styles: 17th-century

Renaissance with four-poster beds, 18th-century Louis XVI, 19th-century Biedermeier, and 20th-century Laura Ashley country house – older is better, or at least more interesting. All rooms are large and very comfortable. Hotel guests have free access to the indoor swimming pool, sauna, and bicycles. The stylish gourmet **Feinschmecker Restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves new German cuisine, while regional cuisine is available in the cozier **Kaminstube** (€€). Marktplatz 8, 91555 Feuchtwangen, ☎ 09852-6800, fax 09852-68-068, www.greifen.de. (€€-€€€)

Romantik Hotel Greifen-Post

■ Dinkelsbühl

Hotel Deutches Haus

The **Hotel Deutsches Haus** is in one of the most beautiful half-timbered secular buildings in southern Germany. Rooms are comfortable and romantic with antique furniture. The **restaurant** (€€) serves regional cuisine and has a good local wine selection. Weinmarkt 3, 91550 Dinkelsbühl, ☎ 09851-6058, fax 09851-7911, www.deutsches-haus-dkb.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Hotel Blauer Hecht** is in a former brewery building dating back to 1648. Rooms are romantic with all modern comforts. The old-German **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves regional and international dishes. Schweinemarkt 1, 91550 Dinkelsbühl, ☎ 09851-5810, fax 09851-581-170, www.hotel-blauer-hecht.de. (€€)

The **Hotel Goldene Kanne** is in a 17th-century building in the heart of the Old Town. Rooms are fairly modern, however, with the two bay-window suites especially nice. The **Angus** (€-€€) serves steaks and Mexican dishes. Segringer Straße 8, 91550 Dinkelsbühl, ☎ 09851-572-910, fax 09851-572-929, www.hotel-goldene-kanne.de. (€€)

Youth Hostels

The **DJH Feuchtwangen** is in a modern building 10 minutes walk from the center of town. The hostel is closed from mid-November to mid-February. Dr.-Hans-Güthlein-Weg 1, 91555 Feuchtwangen, ☎ 09852-670-990, fax 09852-670-9920.

The **DJH Dinkelsbühl** is in a large, early 16th-century, half-timbered building near Segringer Tor. It is closed from November to February. Koppengasse 10, 91550 Dinkelsbühl, ☎ 09851-9509, fax 09851-4874.

Camping

Campingplatz Frankenhöhe, just south of Schillingsfürst, has very good facilities and views of the palace. It has 160 lots and is open year-round. 91583 Schillingsfürst, ☎ 09868-5111, fax 09868-959-699, www.campingplatz-frankenhoehe.de.

Campingplatz Dinkelsbühl, a well-equipped campsite, is just north of the town next to a small lake. Angling and pony rides are available on-site. It has 475 lots and is open year-round. Kobeltsmühle 2, 91550 Dinkelsbühl, ☎ 09851-7817, fax 09851-7848, www.campingpark-dinkelsbuehl.de.

Allgäu & Bayerisch-Schwaben (Bavarian Swabia)

Like Franken, the Allgäu and Bayerisch-Schwaben (Bavarian Swabia) only became part of Bavaria in the Napoleonic era. Bayerisch-Schwaben is in the northern section of the area and for tourists the most interesting parts are the towns along the Romantic Road such as **Augsburg** and **Nördlingen**. The Allgäu in the south is a tourism giant. The area is famous for its rolling green hills and almost constant Alpine views on the southern horizon. It has many cultural-historical sites in addition to the seemingly endless outdoor activities.

IN THIS CHAPTER

- Southern Romantic Road 402
  - Ries-Danube Region 403
  - Augsburg 412
  - Landsberg am Lech 422
  - Pfaffenwinkel 428
  - Schwangau & Füssen 435
- Algäu 445
  - Kempten 445
  - Unterallgäu 450

During the Middle Ages, Swabia was an important territory and often fought over by the major forces in the early Holy Roman Empire. In modern times, Swabia is mostly associated with the German state of Baden-Württemberg but a small section was given to Bavaria by Napoleon Bonaparte. This part is known as Bayerisch-Schwaben (Bavarian Swabia).

Before Napoleon redrew the map, the whole area was divided into small, often very small, independent states ruled by anyone and anything from bishops to knights, monasteries to Free Imperial Cities.

Free Imperial Cities, including Kempten, Nördlingen, Lindau, and Donauwörth, played an important role in local history during the Middle Ages but all lost importance following the devastations of the Thirty Years' War. The only one to maintain its importance up to the Napoleonic era, and indeed to the present, is Augsburg. The monasteries generally did better during the late 17th and 18th centuries as is obvious from the size and Baroque splendor of the churches and former monastery buildings that are major tourist destinations. Flaunting their wealth made the religious institutions plums ripe for the picking. When Napoleon forced secularization in 1802 on other parts of Germany the staunchly Roman Catholic Wittelsbach rulers of Bavaria were more than eager to participate in the land and property grab. Monasteries were allowed to reopen in Bavaria about three decades later, which helps to explain the large number of monastery complexes in Bavaria that have been able to maintain their Baroque heritage. If you see only one monastery in Bavaria, make it **Ottobeuren in Unterallgäu**.

Information Sources

Tourismusverband Bayerisch-Schwaben, Fuggerstraße 9, 86150 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-450-4010, fax 0821-4504-0120, www.bayerisch-schwaben.de.

Allgäu Marketing, Allgäuer Straße 1, 87435 Kempten, ☎ 0831-575-3730, fax 0831-575-3733, www.allgaeu.info.

Getting Around

The region has a very good public transportation system. Augsburg is an important railway junction, with numerous ICE and IC trains. Kempten and Lindau also have mainline rail services, while regional trains are available to all major towns. Bus services to smaller towns are reasonably frequent and often useful to connect between towns that are close to each other but on separate railway lines, as is frequently the case with towns in separate Alpine valleys.

Southern Romantic Road

While the northern part of the Romantic Road is in Franken, the southern half runs through Bayerisch-Schwaben and part of Oberbayern before reaching its conclusion in the Allgäu. **Nördlingen** is famous for its round Old Town, completely encircled by its original town wall, while **Donauwörth** has a lovely location at the confluence of the Wörnitz and the Danube. **Augsburg**, a former rich free imperial city, lost much of its treasure during World War II but is still well worth visiting. It was the home of the rich Fuggers and saw some of the first

Renaissance and Baroque buildings on German soil. From here, the Romantic Road passes through Upper Bavaria, including **Landshut** with its interesting Old Town as well as the **Wieskirche**, arguably the most perfect Bavarian Rococo church ever constructed. The route enters the Allgäu to finish in **Füssen** near the wildly romantic **Schloss Neuschwanstein**, the ultimate 19th-century romantic fantasy and the inspiration for Disney's castle.

For tourist information and transportation, see the *Northern Romantic Road* section in the *Mittelfranken* chapter.

Ries-Danube Region

About 15 million years ago, a meteorite hit Germany and left a crater 20 km/12 miles in diameter. The meteorite was almost a kilometer/half-mile wide and hit at 100,000 km/h/62,000 mph with a force 250,000 times the Hiroshima atom bomb. This crater is known as the Ries and is the most researched meteorite crater in the world. The landscape of the Ries, which is still without any high trees, can be observed from the church tower in Nördlingen or the rock in nearby Wallerstein.

Information Sources

Ferienland Donau-Ries, Pflegstraße 10, 86609 Donauwörth, ☎ 0906-74-211, fax 0906-74-212, www.ferienland.donau-ries.de.

Getting Around

In contrast to many other small towns on the Romantic Road, Donauwörth has excellent rail connections. It has long been a major hub and thus has good connections to Augsburg, Ulm, Ingolstadt, Regensburg, and Nürnberg. An hourly service is also available to Nördlingen (30 minutes) with a halfway stop in Harburg. However, traveling north of Nördlingen toward Dinkelsbühl is more problematic. Bus services are available on weekdays but very seldom on weekends.

If traveling by car, Nördlingen's Old Town can only be entered via one gate – signposting is clear. On quiet days, it is possible to park in the heart of the Old Town; otherwise use the parking lots just outside the town walls.

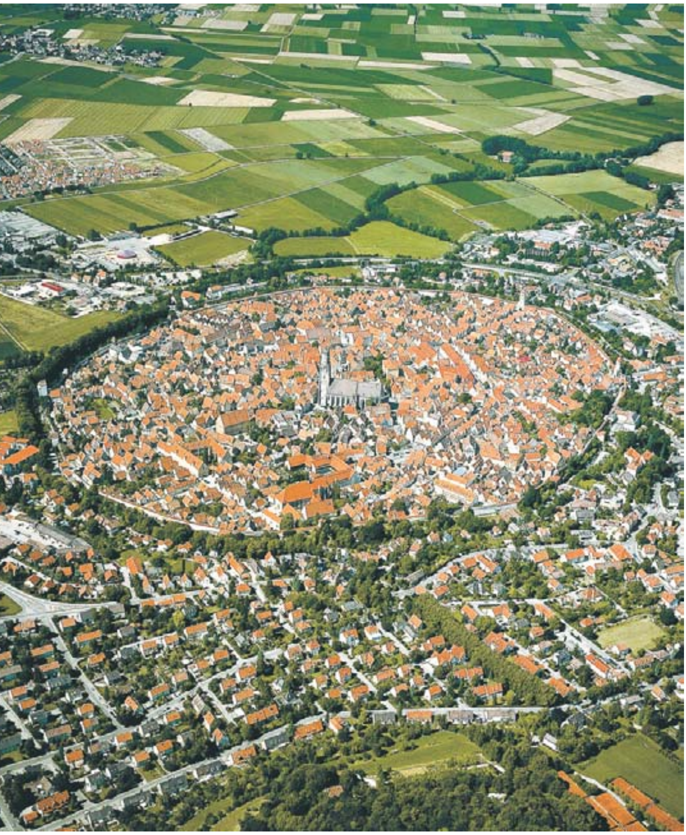
Nördlingen

Nördlingen is even farther from the highways and attracts visibly fewer tourists than Rothenburg and Dinkelsbühl. It is once again a completely walled-in town but, interestingly, it is almost perfectly round. The town's written history started in 898 and it became a free imperial city in 1215. Although Protestant from 1522, the town still executed 34 women and a man during the witch hunts of the late 16th century. Its population was halved in the Thirty Years' War and it never recovered its former importance. It became part of Bavaria in 1803. Only in 1939 did the population again exceed the level of 1618.

Tourist Office

Verkehrsamt, Marktplatz 2, 86720 Nördlingen im Ries, ☎ 09081-4380, www.noerdlingen.de.

Old Town



Nördlingen

The main sights are once again the interesting old houses. Here, in contrast to Rothenburg and Dinkelsbühl, it is possible to see decaying and less well maintained buildings in the back streets. The buildings are mostly from the 15th and 16th century, confirming that Nördlingen's wealth ended with the Thirty Years' War.

The 15th-century **St Georgskirche** (St George's Church), Am Obstmarkt, has a 90-m/295-ft tower. Virtually in the center of town, it has the best views on the Romantic Road, as the interesting circular Old Town and its concentric development are clearly visible. The interior of the church itself is bright and has intricate vaulting. The 365 steps of the tower, known as **Daniel**, ☎ 09081-271-813, can be scaled daily from 9 am to 5:30 pm, up to 8 pm from April to October. Admission is €1.50. Every half-hour, from 10 pm to midnight, the tower watchman still shouts "So G'sell so" ("Everything's fine!") to the questionable pleasure of early sleepers.

The nearby **Rathaus** (Town Hall) is the oldest stone building in town. Parts date from the 13th century, but the building was significantly altered around 1500.

The **Stadtmauer** (Town Wall) is the only one in Germany that is still fully accessible. It is possible to walk around the town, mostly under cover, on the wall and pass 11 watchtowers and five gates on the 2.6-km/1.6-mile hike. The **Stadtmauermuseum** (Town Walls Museum), Löpsingerstraße, ☎ 09081-9180, is spread over the six floors of the Löpsinger Tower Gate. In addition to the exhibits of canons, uniforms, and models, fine views can be enjoyed from the top floor. Opening hours are daily from April to October, 10 am to 4:30 pm. Admission is €1.50.

Nördlingen's St Georgskirche

The **Stadtmuseum Nördlingen** (Town Museum), Vordere Gerbergasse 1, ☎ 09081-273-8230, www.stadtmuseum-noerdlingen.de, is housed in the medieval Spital complex. It has exhibits on local history, including a special section on the Battle of Nördlingen (1634), a devastating defeat for the Protestants. The fine collection of 15th- and 16th-century paintings shows the wealth the town enjoyed prior to the Thirty Years' War. Opening hours are March to October from Tuesday to Wednesday, 1:30 to 4:30 pm. Admission is €3.

Visitors interested in geology will enjoy the nearby **Rieskrater-Museum**, Eugene-Shoemaker-Platz 1, ☎ 09081-273-8220. The emphasis is on local geology and meteorology of the well-researched Ries crater. The prize exhibit is a moon rock on permanent loan from NASA, which did research here prior to the moon landings. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to noon and 1:30 to 4:30 pm. Admission is €3.

At the station is the **Bayerisches Eisenbahnmuseum** (Bavarian Railway Museum), Am Hohen Weg, ☎ 09083-340, www.bayerisches-eisenbahnmuseum.de, the second-largest museum of its kind in Bavaria. It has about 120 vehicles, which are frequently used for outings in the region – see *Adventures*. Opening hours are March to October on Saturday from noon to 4 pm and Sunday, 10 am to 5 pm. From May to September, the museum is also open Tuesday to Friday from noon to 4 pm. Admission is €4.

In the region of Nördlingen are three castles belonging to the Prince of Oettingen-Wallerstein. The most interesting one is in Harburg.

Wallerstein

Just five km/three miles north of Nördlingen is the small town of Wallerstein. A 12th-century castle on the hill overlooking the town was once the regional seat of power of the Staufen emperors but fell to the **House of Oettingen-Wallerstein** in 1250. The castle was destroyed during the Thirty Years' War and never rebuilt. Instead, the Wallersteins built a magnificent new palace in town, which is still the family's primary residence. (Both the palace and its fine gardens were recently closed to the public.)

The main reason to visit the town is to climb the **Wallersteiner Felsen**, a huge 65-m/213-ft-high rock in the center of the town. A steep path and eventually steps lead to the top, with wonderful views of the Ries basin.

Also worth seeing in town is the Baroque **Pest- oder Dreifaltigkeitssäule** (Plague or Holy Trinity Column) erected following the plague of 1679. The nearby mid-13th century **Pfarrkirche St. Alban** (Parish Church) is a rare sample of Gothic and Renaissance architecture.

Schloss Baldern

Bopfingen-Baldern

Schloss Baldern, Schlossstraße 12, 73441 Bopfingen-Baldern, ☎ 07362-96-880, www.fuerst-wallerstein.de, is not on the Romantic Route but it is worth the 12-km/7½-mile detour west of Nördlingen. It is a rare Baroque castle with a lovely ballroom. It also houses one of the largest private weapons collections in Germany. Opening hours are April to October, Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm with compulsory guided tours every hour. Admission is €4.50.

Harburg

Schloss Harburg

Drivers can easily miss the town of Harburg but not the castle – the main route passes through a tunnel directly underneath one of the best-preserved old castles in Bavaria. **Schloss Harburg** (Castle), 86655 Harburg in Schwaben, ☎ 09080-96-860, www.fuerst-wallerstein.de, dates from the mid-11th century and is the largest Staufen castle north of the Alps, though it passed into the hands of the Oettinger-Wallersteins at the end of the 13th century. It was expanded during the 18th century. Opening hours are April to October, Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm, with compulsory guided tours every hour. Admission is €4.50.

At the foot of the hill next to the Wörnitz is the charming town of Harburg. The town is picturesque, with many half-timbered buildings, and is well worth strolling through.

Donauwörth

Donauwörth is another small town with some original town walls surviving to the present. It is less interesting than Nördlingen or Dinkelsbühl but still worth a brief stopover.

Donauwörth Rathaus

The town started as a fishing village at the confluence of the Wörnitz and the Danube. The construction of a bridge over the Danube in 977 made it an important stop on medieval trading routes. The town grew rich and became a free imperial city in 1301. As with the other once important towns on the Romantic Road, changing trade routes lessened Donauwörth's importance. However, even to the present day, it has excellent transportation links to larger cities in the region.

Tourist Office

Städtische Tourist Information, Rathausgasse 1, 86609 Donauwörth, ☎ 0906-789-151, www.donauwoerth.de.

Sightseeing

Most of the sights are in **Reichstraße**, the main road through the town. More are on the **Island Ried** in the Wörnitz River, close to its confluence with the Danube. The museums are best left for a very rainy day.

The wide Reichstraße is one of the most impressive main streets in the area. At is far end is the large **Fuggerhaus**, Pflegestraße 2, with a Renaissance gable. It belonged to the famous Augsburg banking family. Nearby is the **Heilig Kreuz Kloster** (Holy Cross Monastery) with an interesting Baroque pilgrim's church. The **Münster** (Minster), Reichstraße, is a brick Gothic building with Gothic frescos and a tabernacle from 1503. On a very clear day, the view from its 57-m/187-ft-high tower reaches all the way to the Alps. Ascending the tower is only possible on weekends from May to September at 1:30 pm.

The oldest house in town is **Café Engel**, Reichstraße 10, dating from 1297. The **Rathaus** (Town Hall) at the bottom of Reichstraße dates from the 13th century, but its façade is mid-19th century. The adjacent **Marienbrunnen** (St Mary's fountain) spouts potable water. Some of the original town walls, gates, and towers can be seen on the side facing the Wörnitz River as well as to the east, facing the Kallbach stream.

Käthe Kruse dolls

Käthe Kruse (1883-1968) is famous in doll-making circles. Her pretty dolls were designed to be played with by children in a time when many dolls still had fragile porcelain heads. The **Käthe-Kruse-Puppen-Museum** (Doll Museum), Pflegestraße 2a, ☎ 0906-789-170, has a display of about 150 of her dolls. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from May to September, 11 am to 5 pm; April and October from 2 to 5 pm; and November to March on Wednesday and weekends from 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €2.

Cultural Events

End of July Donauwörth sees the **Schwäbischwerder Kindertag** in which over 1,000 children performs the town's history in a large open-air concert. It is followed by a processional march in period costumes through the Old Town.

Several summer concerts and festivals are staged annually in Donauwörth. The **Open-Air Theater** at Mangoldfelsen, www.theater-donauwoerth.de, stages comedies, operettas, musicals, and dramas from June to August. In June and July, open-air concerts of chamber music are held in the courtyard of the monastery on the island. The **Donauwörther-Kulturtage** in October involves three weeks of theater, music, literature, and art.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

From Easter to October, the **Nördlingen tourist office** conducts guided walking tours of the Old Town at 2 pm. More romantic are the walks with the **night watchman**, daily from mid-May to mid-September at 8:30 pm.

The **Donauwörth tourist office** conducts guided walking tours from May to September on weekdays at 6 pm.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

The most popular cycling route in the region remains the Romantic Road. Bicycles may be taken for free on some trains in the region, including the stretch from Nördlingen to Donauwörth and from Donauwörth to Augsburg. The latter segment of about 50 km/31 miles is worth doing by train, as it is known as the least interesting stretch of the entire Romantic Road, no matter what mode of transportation you use.

Bicycle rentals are available in **Nördlingen** from **Radsport Böckle**, Reimlinger Straße 19, ☎ 09081-801-040, or from **Zweirad Müller**, Gewerbestraße 16, ☎ 09081-5675, and in **Donauwörth** from **Top Bike Brachem**, Kapellstraße 25, ☎ 0906-8077, or from **Fa Mück**, Dillinger Straße 57, ☎ 0906-3468.

By Train

On some weekends, a historic steam train makes three roundtrips between Nördlingen and Dinkelsbühl. Occasionally, the journey extends to Harburg and Feuchtwangen. Details are available from the tourist offices or from the **Bayerisches Eisenbahnmuseum**, Postfach 1316, 86713 Nördlingen im Ries, ☎ 09083-340, www.bayerisches-eisenbahnmuseum.de.

Adventures on Water

Angling

Donauwörth, founded as a fishing community, in 1434 received an enormous fishing concession after a local fisherman had saved Emperor Sigmund's life. In addition to the 20 km/12 miles of the Danube and 35 km/22 miles of the Wörnitz, several smaller streams and ponds are open to anglers. Information and licenses are available from the tourism office.

Canoeing & Kayaking

Canoeing is possible on both the Danube and Wörnitz. Boat rentals are available from **Kanu-Laden Purtec**, Alte Augsburger Straße 12, Donauwörth, ☎ 09090-8086.

Where to Stay & Eat

☞ See pages 50 and 52 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

Nördlingen

NH Klösterle

The very pleasant **NH Klösterle** is in the Old Town in a former monastery building with a history dating from around 1200. The step-gabled Renaissance façade and huge, sloping red roof are clearly newer but blends in with the surrounding buildings. Rooms are comfortable and modern. The rustic **Maria Holl** (€€) serves international cuisine. Beim Klösterle 1, 86720 Nördlingen,

☎ 09081-87-080, fax 09081-870-8100, www.nh-hotels.com. (€€-€€€)

The **Kaiserhof Hotel Sonne** is in the heart of the Old Town. The building dates back to the 15th century and not all walls and floors are straight or level. Rooms are individually furnished. For centuries, while the monks were still in the Klösterle, it was the choice of kings and emperors. The **Weinstäpfele** (€-€€) serves regional cuisine in a rustic setting with vaulted ceilings. Marktplatz 3, 86720 Nördlingen, ☎ 09081-273-8380, fax 09081-23-999, www.kaiserhof-hotel-sonne.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Hotel Am Ring** is outside the walled-in area. Rooms are modern and tastefully decorated. The **restaurant** (€€) serves regional dishes with seasonal specialties. Bürgermeister-Reiger-Straße 14, 86720 Nördlingen, ☎ 09081-290-030, fax 09081-23-170, www.hotelamring.de. (€€)

A pleasant informal restaurant with excellent pizza and pasta is **La Fontana Pizzeria Espresso-Bar**, Bei den Kornschrannen, ☎ 09081-211-021, www.lafontana.ws. It is inside a large, red building with a terrace on the square, next to a fountain recalling the town's history. Prices are low, for both the food and the long wine list. (€)

Harburg

Gasthof Zum Straußen is famous for offering some of the the best values along the Romantic Road. Rooms are simple but pleasant. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves local Swabian cuisine in huge portions. Marktplatz 2, 86655 Harburg, ☎ 09080-1398, fax 09080-4324, hotel-straussen@web.de. (€-€€)

Hotel-Restaurant Fürstliche Burgschenke inside the Harburg castle has seven bedrooms that are modern and practically furnished. The large **restaurant** (€-€€) serves mostly local dishes. Burgstraße 1, 86655 Harburg, ☎ 09080-1504, fax 09080-1581, www.burgschenke-harburg.de. (€€)

Hotel-Restaurant Fürstliche Burgschenke

Donauwörth

The modern **Parkhotel** is on a hill overlooking the Old Town. The large rooms are bright and comfortably furnished. The higher ones have fine views, as does the **restaurant** (€€), which serves local and international dishes.

The Parkhotel

Sternschanzenstraße 1, 86609 Donauwörth, ☎ 0906-706-510, fax 0906-706-5180, www.parkhotel-donauwoerth.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Posthotel Traube** in the Old Town has a 300-year tradition and can count Mozart as a former guest. However, the hotel was completely destroyed in 1945 and thus rebuilt in a more modern style. Rooms are comfortably furnished with dark-wood furniture. The **restaurant** (€€) serves mostly Bavarian food. Kapellstraße 14-16, 86609 Donauwörth, ☎ 0906-706-440, fax 0906-23-390, www.posthotel-traube.de. (€€)

Youth Hostel

The modern **DJH Donauwörth** is in the northwest of town, 30 minutes hike from the train station. It is closed from mid-November to mid-February. Goethestraße 10, 86609 Donauwörth, ☎ 0906-5158, fax 0906-243-817.

Camping

The **Donau-Lech Campground** is five km/three miles from Donauwörth on the banks of a small lake. It is open year-round and has 100 lots. Campingweg 1, 86698 Eggelstetten, ☎/fax 09090-4046, www.donau-lech-camping.de.

Tents may also be pitched at the **Kanu-Club Donauwörth**, An der Westspange, ☎ 0906-22-605.

Augsburg

With 265,000 inhabitants, this is the third-largest city in Bavaria, after Munich and Nürnberg. The main attractions are the splendid Renaissance and Rococo buildings that reflect the wealth this town once enjoyed.

Augsburg is one of Germany's oldest cities. It was founded in 15 BC by Druses and Tiberius, stepsons of Roman Emperor Augustus. According to Tacitus, it was the most splendid city in the colony, maintaining its importance as a trading center well into the 17th century. It was the first city to introduce the Italian Renaissance to Germany and later also the home of Rococo. During the late Middle Ages, the Fugger family, based in Augsburg, served as banker for popes, kings, and emperors. Much of the wealth and splendor rubbed off on the surviving buildings.

Augsburg saw several milestones during the Reformation. In 1518, Cardinal Cajetanus met Martin Luther here but failed to convince him to recant his views. In 1530, the Confession of Augsburg was drawn up by Protestant delegations to the Diet. Much blood was spilled before the Protestant rulers received the right to religious freedom in the Peace of Augsburg (1555). However, the Thirty Years' War, fought over many of the issues that were supposedly settled in 1555, finally ended Augsburg's prosperity and that of many other towns in the region. Wealth only returned with 19th and 20th century industrialization. Rudolf Diesel invented the diesel engine here. The Messerschmitt airplanes produced here were the most advanced used by the Luftwaffe and made Augsburg a major target for air raids during World War II.

A Free Imperial City since 1276, Augsburg was forced to become part of Bavaria in 1806. The city was severely damaged during World War II but large parts of the Old Town were restored.

Tourist Office

Regio Augsburg Tourismus, Bahnhostraße 7, 86150 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-502-070, www.regio-augsburg.de.

Getting Around

Augsburg is a mere 40 minutes by train from Munich. There are at least four trains per hour – the cheaper local trains (RE and RB) are only minutes slower than the IC and ICE trains. It is a major stop on the route from Munich to Stuttgart and beyond.

By car it is reached quickly on the Autobahn A8 that connects Munich and Stuttgart. It is also easy to access all Romantic Road destinations by road from here.

Sightseeing

The main sights of Augsburg are in a long, narrow stretch of the Old Town. north of the Rathaus are the Dom and Mozarthaus, and to the south most sights are in or near the

Augsburg Rathaus

Goldene Saal in the Rathaus

Maximilianstraße. A walking tour of the sights described here takes around two hours plus time spent inside the attractions.

Northern Old Town Area

The Renaissance **Rathaus** (Town Hall), Rathausplatz, ☎ 0821-502-0724, replaced its Gothic predecessor in 1614. It is the most important work of Elias Holl and arguably one of the loveliest secular Renaissance buildings in Germany. It was severely damaged by an air raid in 1944, but rebuilt true to the original. The **Goldene Saal** (Golden Hall) is one of the most impressive ceremonial rooms north of the Alps. The Rathaus and Goldene Saal are open daily from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €1.50.

The **Perlachturm** (Tower) dates partly from 1060. Its present height of 70.4 m/231 ft was achieved in 1616. For the best views of Augsburg, and on a clear day all the way to the Alps, climb the 258 steps to the viewing platform at the top. It is open daily from May to October, 10 am to 6 pm, and on Advent weekends from 2 to 7 pm. Admission is €1. Since 2000, a Glockenspiel (Carillon) plays Mozart tunes daily at 11 am, noon, 5 and 6 pm.

Near the Rathausplatz is the **St Annakirche** (St Anne's Church), Anna-Straße. In 1321, a Carmelite monastery built the Gothic church, which was enlarged in the 15th century. Martin Luther stayed in the monastery during his 1518 visit to Augsburg. The church is famous for the **Fuggerkapelle** (Fugger Funeral Chapel), the first religious Italian Renaissance structure erected on German soil. It cost more than the Fuggerei (see below). Most of the church received a Rococo makeover

The Perlachturm (Dark Avenger)

in the 18th century. However, the 15th-century **Goldschmiedekapelle** (Goldsmiths' Chapel), used as Lutheran a church, still has its original Gothic layout and wall paintings. It also has paintings by Lucas Cranach. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 12:30 pm and 3 to 6 pm, Sunday from noon to 6 pm.

The playwright Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) was born in what is now the **Gedenkstätte für Bertolt Brecht** (Memorial), Auf dem Rain 7, ☎ 0821-324-2779. He spent his youth in Augsburg until moving to Munich in 1917 and during the Nazi period to Scandinavia and the USA, before settling in East Berlin. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €1.50.

BERTOLT BRECHT

Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956) was born in Augsburg but intensely disliked the town and moved to Munich in 1917, then soon after to Berlin. He developed his theory of epic theater in which the audience should view the action critically and intellectually rather than become emotionally attached to characters. Romance is completely absent in his works. He was a staunch Communist and moved to Sweden and later the USA during the Nazi Period. Following the war, he settled in East Berlin and enjoyed a more privileged lifestyle than other citizens could. West Germans were slow to forgive him for his strong Communist leanings. Augsburg waited until the 1980s before staging one of his plays and the museum in his honor opened even later.

Following the failure of Communism in Eastern Europe, Brecht has enjoyed a worldwide revival, with critics again focusing on his plays rather than his politics. Meryl Streep recently starred in New York in his "Mother Courage and her Children". He had most success with *Die Dreigroschenoper* ("Three Penny Opera"), while other famous works include "The Caucasian Chalk Circle", "The Life of Galileo", and "Drums in the Night".

In 1516, Jakob Fugger the Rich (see below) donated the **Fuggerei** as home for the poor. It is the oldest social housing project in the world that is still in use. Even now, Augsburgers, who become poor and des-

The Fuggerei *(KlausF)*

titute through no fault of their own, can find accommodation here. The annual rent is still a symbolic Rhenish guilder (€0.88!) *and* three daily prayers for the founder. The 104 homes currently house around 150 people. The building is a city inside a city, with eight streets and four access gates that are locked at 10 pm. Residents arriving late are fined 25-50 cents. The small **Fuggereimuseum**, Mitelgasse 13, is in an original house in the Fuggerei. It explains the history of the institution and is furnished in the style of the 17th and 18th century. It is open daily from March to December 23, 9 am to 6 pm. Admission is €1. (From the Rathaus follow Barfüßer and Jakoberstraße east, then turn right into Herrengasse.)

The **Dom St Maria** (Cathedral of St Mary), Domplatz, is mainly 14th-century Gothic, but the core, including the crypt is from the 10th century and Romanesque. The church has wall paintings from the Romanesque and Gothic periods, but the altar by Hans Holbein receives the most attention. Note the five windows of the prophets on the south side of the nave. This 12th-century painted glass is considered the oldest of its kind in Germany.

The musical Mozart family worked in Augsburg from 1643 onwards. Leopold Mozart, father of Wolfgang Amadeus, was born in Augsburg in 1719. His place of birth is now called the **Mozarthaus**, Frauentorstraße 30, ☎ 0821-324-3894, with a museum dedicated to Mozart and his works. Wolfgang Amadeus visited Augsburg five times – both as tourist and as musician. His music is frequently performed at various venues. The museum is open Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €1.50.

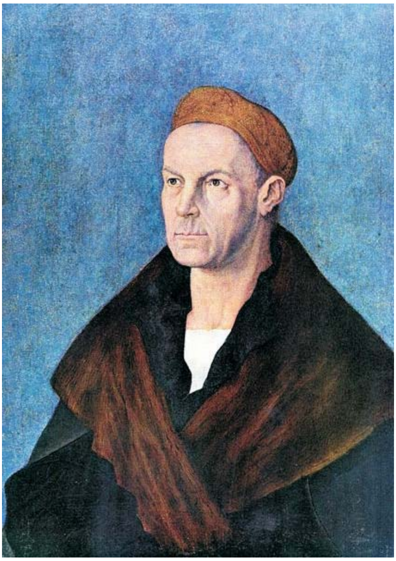
Augsburg Cathedral *(MV Romero)*

Maximilianstraße

Maximilianstraße leads from the Rathaus southward. It is the traditional shopping street, with many fine gabled houses from the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

The **Fuggerhäuser** (Fugger Houses), Maximilianstraße 36-38, are a group of existing buildings that were united behind a Renaissance façade in 1515 to serve as city residence and offices of the Fugger family. The building is mostly in private use, but enter the **Damenhof** (Ladies' Courtyard) to see the colonnaded area reserved for the Fugger women.

THE FUGGER FAMILY OF AUGSBURG



Jacob Fugger (Albrecht Dürer)

At the end of the 15th century, the Fugger family concern was a prominent trading firm in Augsburg. Jakob Fugger implemented ideas learned in Italy about double entry bookkeeping and cashless trade into the business practices, but it was cornering the European market for copper that made his fortune. From 1500, Jakob Fugger, by now known as The Rich, acted as banker to the Pope and in 1519 financed the election of Emperor Karl V. Foundations set up by Jakob Fugger still finance the tourist magnets of the Fuggerei and the Fugger Chapel in St Anne's. He also spent lavishly on the arts, bringing the Renaissance to Germany, and he had several paintings and drawings done by Albrecht Dürer, among others.

Despite his nickname, Jakob Fugger was not the richest man in the world. His nephew, Anton Fugger, managed that around 1546. By many counts, he was the richest man the world has ever known. The continuous demands for financing from the Habsburg Emperors, who never bothered to repay debts, forced the Fuggers to diversify out of financing into property. By 1658 the financing firm was dissolved.

A block farther is the magnificent Rococo **Schaezler-Palais** (Palace), Maximilianstraße 46, ☎ 0821-324-4117. It was erected in 1765-70 by the Von Liebenhofens, a wealthy banking family. It has a huge **Festsaal** (Banqueting Hall) with Rococo ceiling and wall panels. Marie Antoinette attended a ball here en route to getting married in Paris. The palace houses several galleries. The Baroque Gallery has mostly paintings by German artists. The **Staatsgalerie Alter Kunst** (National Old Masters' Gallery) displays works by local painters, including Holbein and Dürer, as well as by Van Dyck, Veronese, and Tiepolo. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €3.

At the far end of the Maximilianstraße are the Roman Catholic **St Ulrich and St Afra**, ☎ 0821-345-560, and the Lutheran **St Ulrichskirche**. The Late Gothic church was built on the site where St Afra was martyred in 304 AD. St Ulrich, whose grave is in the crypt, helped in the victory over the Hungarians in the 10th century. A Baroque preaching hall was added in the early 18th century to serve as a Lutheran church.

The **Augsburger Puppenkiste** (Marionettes) are among the most famous in the world. Presentations are held on Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday at 2 and 7:30 pm. Their program is available from the tourism office or at www.augsburger-puppenkiste.de. A small museum, **Die Kiste** (The Box), Spitalgasse 15, ☎ 0821-450-3450, www.diekiste.net, is dedicated to this art form. It is open Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 7 pm.

The 16th-century **Rotes Tor** (Red Gate) was remodeled by Elias Holl in the early 17th century. This fortified gate is most popular as a huge open-air stage.

Farther Afield

Friedberg

Friedberg, a town of around 30,000, is just 12 km/7½ miles east of Augsburg but far too often overlooked by travelers on the Romantic Route. Founded in the 13th century, the town was a major Bavarian fortress offering protection to locals against attacks from the Free Imperial City of Augsburg. Much of the 15th-century town defenses survived to the present and the old town preserved a medieval flavor.

■ Tourist Office

Stadt Friedberg, Marienplatz 5, 86316 Friedberg, ☎ 0821-60-020, www.friedberg.de.

■ Old Town

The **Marienbrunnen** (Mary's Fountain) on Rathausplatz was erected in 1599 following deliverance from the plague. The impressive Renaissance **Rathaus** (Town Hall) was erected in 1673 by a scholar of Elias Holt. Due to financial problems, the **Rathaussaal** (Festival Hall) was only completed at the end of the 19th century with paintings of famous events from the town's history.

The **Schloss** (Castle) dates partly from the 13th century but it was damaged in several wars and fires. The present Renaissance structure is from the mid-17th century. For over a century it has been housing the **Museum im Wittelsbacher Schloss** (Wittelsbach Castle), Schlossstraße 21, ☎ 0821-605-651. The museum focuses on local history and art with a special section on clocks, as Friedberg was an important clock-making center during the 17th and 18th century. Opening hours are Tuesday to Friday from 2 to 6 pm and weekends from 10 am to 6 pm. Admission is €3.50.

Friedberg has several noteworthy churches. In the heart of the old town is **St Jakob** (St Jacob's), St.-Jakobs-Platz, ☎ 0821-607-0232. A church has been on this site since the 13th century but the present structure is late 19th-century neo-Romanesque. The Metzler organ was installed in 2001 and is frequently used for concerts, especially of Baroque music.

Artistically more impressive is the **Wallfahrtskirche Unseres Herrn Ruhe** (Pilgrims Church), Herrgottsruhstraße, around a kilometer/0.6 mile east of the old town. It is a very impressive Bavarian Baroque church built in 1731-53. The wall paintings are by Cosmas Damian Asam while his student Matthäus Günther did the ceiling frescoes. The stuccowork is by Franz Xavier Feichtmayr.

TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN: LEGOLAND

IMAGINATION
LAND OF ADVENTURE
KNIGHTS' KINGDOM
LEGO® X-TREME
NEW
POWER BUILDER
LEGO® CITY
MINILAND
ANNUAL PASS COUNTER
PARK ENTRANCE
LEGOLAND
For more information, news and events hit www.legoland.de

Around 40 minutes by car from Augsburg, just off the Autobahn A8 near Ulm (exit Günzburg), is the huge fun park of Legoland Deutschland, Legoland Allee, 89312 Günzburg, ☎ 08221-700-700, www.legoland.de. Families with small children can easily spend a day or two here far away from Bavarian Rococo or high art. It has some 50 attractions and 50 million Lego blocks.

Legoland claims that it can be reached by car within an hour from almost anywhere in Allgäu. The park can also be reached by train; a free shuttle bus is available from Günzburg station, with frequent rail connections from Ulm, Donauwörth, and Augsburg. Opening hours are daily from early April to early November, 10 am to 6 pm. Admission passes are available for one day, two consecutive days, or a full year at €30, €43, and €59 for adults and €26, €37, and €49 for children three to 11 years. The fee includes all attractions except the Audi Driving School and Gold Panning, which are €3.50 each.

Cultural Events

The **Fugger und die Musik** (The Fuggers and Music) is a concert series arranged by the tourism office annually from May to June. It involves music played in places associated with the Fuggers, including several churches and the Goldene Saal in Augusburg, as well as in Nürnberg and other towns.

The **Freilichtbühne am Roten Tor** (Open-Air Theater), ☎ 0821-324-4900, www.theater-augsburg.de, is the largest open-air theater in southern Germany. Its largest performances are operas and musicals staged usually between June and August.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

The tourism office conducts guided walking tours, departing from the Rathaus, daily from April to October at 2 pm, but only on Saturday from November to March.

Where to Stay & Eat

The **Steigenberger Hotel Drei Mohren** is in the center of town close to the pedestrian zone. It is an exquisite hotel with large, luxurious rooms. The upper floors are more modern. **Maximilian's Restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves international cuisine with strong Euro-Asian and Mediterranean influences. Maximilianstraße 40, 86150 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-50-360, fax 0821-157-864, www.steigenberger.de. (€€€)

Steigenberger Hotel Drei Mohren

Hotel Augusta is at the northern edges of the pedestrian zone in the former printing works of the local newspaper. Rooms have all the latest technological accessories. The Zirbel-Stuben (€€), open for dinner only, serves international and regional dishes. Ludwigstraße 2, 86152 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-50-140, fax 0821-501-4605, www.hotelaugusta.de. (€€-€€€)

Privat-Hotel Riegele is adjacent to the station and named after one of the town's traditional breweries. The stylish rooms are large and furnished to high standards. The **Bräustuble** (€€) is more upmarket than the name suggests with fine Bavarian and international cuisine. Viktoria Straße 4, 86150 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-509-000, fax 0821-5170746, www.hotel-riegele.de. (€€€)

The **Romantik Hotel Augsburger Hof** is the oldest hotel in town. It has a historic Renaissance façade but is more modern inside. It is close to the Dom and next to the former city walls. Rooms are individually furnished with good taste and attention to detail. The rustic **restaurant** (€€-€€€) serves international cuisine, but the local, Swabian dishes are what regulars come for. Auf dem Kreuz 2, 86152 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-343-050, fax 0821-343-0555, www.augsburger-hof.de. (€€-€€€)

The **Dom Hotel** is a fourth-generation, family-run establishment close to the Dom. Rooms are very pleasant – some have exposed beams and great views. Frauentorstraße 8, 86152 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-343-930, fax 0821-3439-3200, www.domhotel-augsburg.de. (€€)

City Hotel Ost am Kö is a few blocks from the station at the edge of the pedestrian zone. The 1960s-style concrete façade is somewhat uninspiring but rooms are pleasantly furnished. The ones facing the courtyard are quieter. Fuggerstraße 4-6, 86150 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-502-040, fax 0821-502-0444, www.ostamkoe.de. (€€-€€€)

Closer to the station is the modern **InterCity Hotel**. The focus is on business travelers but tourists also appreciate the good location and low prices on slow weekends. Rooms are modern and functionally furnished. Guests receive local public transportation passes. Halderstrasse 29, 86150 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-503-90, fax 0821-503-9999, www.intercityhotel.de. (€€)

The **Ibis Hotel beim Hauptbahnhof** is, as the name implies, right at the main station. Rooms are simply furnished, but clean and modern. Halderstraße 25, 86150 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-50-160, fax 0821-501-6150, www.ibishotel.com. (€-€€)

Youth Hostel

The **DJH Augsburg** is a few minutes walk north of the old town. It is closed from just before Christmas to mid-January. The complete hostel is smoke free. Unterer Graben 6, 86152 Augsburg, ☎ 0821-780-8890, fax 0821-7808-8929.

Where to Eat

The stylish **Die Ecke**, Elias-Holl-Patz 2, ☎ 0821-510-600, is close to the Rathaus. It serves mostly regional cuisine with seasonal variations. Although the house has a 400-year tradition, it combines modern elements with rustic décor. (€€-€€€)

Feinkost Kahn, Annastraße 16, ☎ 0821-312-031, is primarily an upscale delicatessen. However, on the second floor is a very good restaurant serving international and regional dishes. It is in the heart of the pedestrian zone. (€€-€€€)

Despite its rather drab decor, the **Fuggereistube**, Jakoberstraße 26, ☎ 0821-30-870, at the north entrance to the Fuggerei, serves very good Bavarian dishes at moderate prices. (€-€€)

The very popular **König von Flandern**, Karolinenstraße 12, ☎ 0821-158-050, is in a large brewery basement near the Perlachturm. In addition to the mild-tasting house beers, it serves simple meals in the large, vaulted cellar. (€-€€)

Camping

Two pleasant campsites are slightly north of Augsburg. **Lech Camping** is a small, 50-lot site with very good facilities. It has many trees and its own small lake, suitable for swimming. It is 10 minutes drive or 25 minutes by bike to the center of Augsburg. The site is open from mid-March to mid-September. Seeweg 6, 86444 Affing-Mühlhausen, ☎ 08207-2200, fax 08207-2202, www.lech-camping.de.

Nearby **Bauer Caravan + Freizeit** will happily sell or rent you an RV or caravan or you can use their campsite, which has 350 lots. It is adjacent to a small lake and has good facilities. It is open from April to October. Augsburger Straße 36, 86444 Affing-Mühlhausen, ☎ 08207-96-170, fax 08207-961-770, www.bauer-caravan.de.

Landsberg am Lech

Although the Lech Valley was settled by Celts and the Romans passed through, Landsberg's modern history started in the mid-eighth century with the foundation of two monasteries. The secular part of the settlement dates mostly from the 12th century when Duke Heinrich der Löwe (Henry the Lion) erected a castle here. Landsberg's wealth was built on the salt trade and the right to tax salt moving through on the Lech.

Being a border town, it became involved in several conflicts between the staunchly Roman Catholic Bavarian dukes and the Lutheran neighbors, especially in Augsburg. The worst was the Thirty Years' War when a combination of the plague, famine, and normal war battles and plunder saw the town population drop from 4,000 in 1618 to only 200 in 1634.

LANDSBERG: NAZI CITY OF YOUTH

Hitler in Landsberg Prison

The most famous event in Landsberg's recent history was Adolf Hitler's imprisonment for nine months in 1924. Following his failed 1923 Putsch in Munich, Hitler was sentenced to five years imprisonment but released by the end of 1924. He wrote the first part of his "bestseller" *Mein Kampf* with the assistance of Rudolf Hess while he was in jail here. After the Nazis came to power, Landsberg became their City of Youth and many Nazi-affiliated youth groups made pilgrimages to the town.

During World War II, a concentration camp was just north of the town and the Landsberg prison itself was overcrowded to four times capacity. Following the war, the prison and camp were used by the allied forces for war criminals. Some 300 condemned war criminals were executed here, including the last executions in West Germany in 1951.

After the war, many people in Landsberg claimed the Nazi connection was purely by accident and could have happened to any town with a prison. However, the town had started to promote itself as the "Town of Hitler" in 1933, years before the official pilgrimages started. In recent years, Landsberg has accepted more responsibility for events during the Third Reich and erected appropriate memorials for the people who died here.

Hitler's prison is still in use and not opened to tourists. It is in the center of Landsberg in Hindenburgring on the opposite bank of the Lech and the railway line from the Old Town. The remains of the concentration camp and some related graves can be seen – follow directions from the north of the town on the road toward Augsburg.

Tourist Office

Kultur und Fremdenverkehrsamt, Hubert-von-Herkomer-Straße 73, 86899 Landsberg am Lech, ☎ 08191-128-246, www.landsberg.de.

Getting Around

Landsberg is 35 km/22 miles south of Augsburg and 50 km/31 miles west of Munich on the A96 toward the Bodensee. It can be reached at least hourly by direct train from Augsburg (50 minutes) and in the same time twice hourly from Munich but a change is required at Kaufering. Rail services to stops farther south on the Romantic Road are limited and generally require multiple change-overs.

Sightseeing

Landsberg has a lovely Old Town with parts of the town defenses, including several gates and towers, surviving. The Lech curves around the Old Town and the best panoramas can be enjoyed from the opposite, left bank of the river.

Hauptplatz with Schmalzturm

The heart of the Old Town is the huge, triangular **Hauptplatz** (Main Square) with its **Marienbrunnen** (Virgin Mary Fountain) from 1783. At the bottom of the sloping square is the **Rathaus** (1699-1702). The lovely stucco façade was done by Dominikus Zimmermann in 1719. He worked and lived for several years in Landsberg and served as mayor from 1749-54. At the upper end of the square is the **Schmalzturm**, also known as the Schöner Turm (Beautiful Tower). This tower gate was part of the original 13th-century town defenses.

A few blocks behind the Rathaus, facing the Lech, are the former warehouses. The largest are the 14th-century **Salzstadel** and the **Lechstadel**, which now houses the town library.

The lovely Baroque **Johanniskirche** (St John's), Vorderer Anger, was built by Dominikus Zimmermann (1750-52). He also did the ceiling frescoes in the choir, as well as the high altar. The wings of the side altar were painted by Franz Anton Anwander.

The **Stadtpfarrkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt** (Town Parish Church Assumption of Mary), Georg-Helmar-Platz is a 15th-century, Late Gothic church that retains an even older Romanesque tower. The inte-

Facing page: Landsberg Hauptplatz with Marienbrunnen

Damen
Herren

rior of this triple-nave basilica is late 17th-century Baroque and partly the work of Dominikus Zimmermann. Note the fine 15th- and 16th-century stained glass windows – the scene of the *Passion* is assumed to be by Hans Holbein. The high altar is by Jörg Pfeiffer. The magnificent organ is frequently used for concerts.

The Bayertor

Behind the church, Kochgasse changes into a flight of stairs leading to the higher parts of the Old Town where the alleys are narrower and the roofs seems steeper. Much of the original town wall survived, with many towers and several gates. The most impressive is the 36-m/120-ft-high **Bayertor**. Although the bright colors look a bit faked, they are true to the Gothic originals of 1425.

Shoe lovers may be keen to visit the **Historisches Schuhmuseum** (Historical Shoe Museum), Schuhhaus Pflanz, Vorderer Anger 274, ☎ 08191-42-296. It is private museum with 18 display cases of shoes from the past 800 years. The most famous shoes are those of King Ludwig II, his cousin Sisi, empress of Austria, and some worn by tennis star Steffi Graf. It also has the largest shoehorn collection in the world. The museum is open any day but Sunday following a telephonic request. Admission is €2.

Cultural Events

A wide range of concerts is arranged throughout the year by the **Kirchenstiftung Mariä Himmelfahrt**, Ludwigstraße 167, www.landsbergerkonzerte.de. The emphasis is on sacral music and the church's magnificent organ is frequently the lead instrument. Each summer, world-renowned organists are invited to play concerts here.

Landsberg is famous for its brass bands and other wind instrument artists. Concerts are held frequently at various venues in town.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

The **tourist office** conducts guided town walks from May to October at 2:30 pm on Wednesday and Sunday.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Bicycle rentals are available from **Radlspaß**, Saarburgstraße 1, ☎ 08191-33-818, or **Mobilagentur Bahnhof Landsberg**, Bahnhofsplatz 1, ☎ 08191-428-8550.

Where to Stay & Eat

Hotel Goggl is conveniently located at the large Hauptplatz in the heart of Old Town Landsberg. Rooms are bright and comfortable with modern furniture. The cheapest rooms are a bit cramped, while the suites are large, with country house-style furniture. Hubert-von-Herkomerstraße 19-20, 86899 Landsberg am Lech, ☎ 08191-3240, fax 08191-324-100, www.hotelgoggl.de. (€€)

Gasthof zum Mohren, also on the Hauptplatz, dates from the 15th century but received a Baroque façade two centuries later. Its typical small town, rustic **restaurant** (€-€€) with beer garden serves Bavarian and Swabian food at very reasonable prices. Simple, but clean bedrooms are also available. Hauptplatz 148, 86899 Landsberg am Lech, ☎ 08191-42210, fax 08191-32-132, www.zum-mohren.de. (€)

Gasthof zum Mohren

The nearby **Zederbräu**, Hauptplatz 155, ☎ 08191-42-241, is famous for its good regional cuisine, although more international fare is also on offer. It has several mostly rustic rooms using ample natural wood. (€-€€)

Camping

Campingpark Landsberg is three km/1.9 miles outside the town, adjacent to a forest. Open year round, it has good facilities and 350 lots. Pössinger Au 1, 86899 Landsberg am Lech, ☎ 08191-47-505, fax 08191-21-406, www.camping-landsberg.de.

Pfaffenwinkel

The landscape of the Pfaffenwinkel area is mostly rolling hills and meadows but the first Alpine peaks already rise from the meadows near Schongau. The area is rich in forests and rivers, making it ideal for hiking, cycling, and watersports. The area has numerous noteworthy monasteries and churches – the name Pfaffenwinkel literally means "Priests' corner."

Towns here are generally very small, with several mentioned below purely one-sight stops. Hotels in the area generally cater for longer stay visitors, often requiring a one-week minimum during the high season, although simple overnight stays are welcome at all mentioned below.

Tourist Office

In contrast to other stops on the Romantic Road in the region, those in Pfaffenwinkel are formally in Oberbayern. Information is available from **Tourismusverband Pfaffenwinkel**, Postfach 1247 86952 Schongau, ☎ 08861-7773, fax 08861-200-678, www.pfaffenwinkel.com.

Getting Around

Of the towns mentioned below, only Schongau and Peiting have railway connections, with the link to Munich easier than to other stops on the Romantic Road. Bus services are available to all towns but the schedules are limited.

Hohenfurch

Tourist Information

Tourismus-Information, Schönachstraße 6, 86978 Hohenfurch, ☎ 08861-3284, www.hohenfurch.de.

Sightseeing

Hohenfurch is a small village of 1,500. The main sight in town is the Rococo **Pfarrkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt** (Parish Church of the Assumption), ☎ 08861-4958. The present building is from the early 18th century with frescoes by Johannes Hehl-Göggingen and stuccowork by Josef Fischer-Faulenbach. The church is generally only open for services but, during daylight hours, it is possible to see the interior through the railings. The local priest is generally willing to unlock these gates upon request.

Just south of the town is the **St Ursula Kapelle** (Chapel), a Late Gothic chapel erected in 1520. It is dedicated to St Ursula, the patron saint of rafters. In previous centuries, rafts of logs from the region would float from here down the Lech to the Danube and occasionally all the way to the Black Sea.

Schongau

Tourist Information

Tourist Information, Münzstraße 1-3, 86956 Schongau, ☎ 08861-214-333, www.schongau.de.

Sightseeing

Schongau, with 12,000 inhabitants, is the largest town in the region. At its core is a lovely Old Town, still encircled by a defensive wall with wooden sentries' walk, four gates, and five towers.

At the heart of the Old Town is the Marienplatz, with a Mariensäule (column with a statue of the Virgin Mary on top). The **Stadtpfarrkirche Mariä Himmelfahrt** (Town Parish Church of the Assumption), ☎ 08861-71-712, is a mid-18th-century Baroque church designed by Dominikus Zimmermann. He also did the stuccowork, while the ceiling frescoes are by Matthäus Günther.

Schongau (Thomas Springer)

At the opposite end of the square is the **Ballenhaus** from 1420. It served as warehouse and town hall. Its Gothic stepped-gable façade is original but the richly paneled Ratsaal (Council Hall) is from 1515 after a town fire required major restoration work.

The **Stadtmuseum** (Town Museum), Christophstraße 55-57, ☎ 08861-214-151, is inside the secularized, mid-15th century Gothic **Erasmuskirche** (Erasmus Church). Some of the frescoes are original, although most of the church received a Baroque makeover during the 17th century. The main emphasis of the museum is religious art and a large coin collection. Opening hours are weekends from 2 to 5 pm. Admission is free.

Around two km from Schongau, in the suburb **Altenstadt**, is one of the finest Romanesque churches in Bavaria, the **Basilika St Michael**, St. Michaelstraße 4, 86972 Altenstadt, ☎ 08861-7315. In a region better known for the Baroque, this 12th-century church with its mostly Gothic interior comes as a pleasant surprise. A large, over three-m/10-ft-tall Christ, known as “Der Große Gott von Altenstadt“ (The Great God of Altenstadt), is the original, while the two side figures are copies of the originals, which were sold to the Bavarian Museum in Munich during the 19th century. The monumental fresco of St Christopher and the baptismal font are also from the early years of the church. Opening hours are daily from 8 am to 7 pm, closing at 8 pm in summer.

TRAVELING WITH CHILDREN: FAIRY TALE FOREST

The **Schongauer Märchenwald** (Fairy Tale Forest), Dießener Straße 6, 86956 Schongau, ☎ 08861-7527, www.schongauer-maerchenwald.de, is between Schongau and Peiting. It is a fun park aimed at smaller children with exhibitions on famous fairy tales, various rides, and a petting zoo. Opening hours are daily in April and October from 10 am to 6 pm; May, June, and September from 9 am to 7 pm; July and August from 9 am to 8 pm; and November to March weekends and school vacations only from 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €4.

Peiting

Tourist Information

Tourist-Information, Ammergauerstraße 2, 86971 Peiting, ☎ 08861-6535, www.peiting.de.

Sightseeing

Peiting, a town of 11,000 just south of Schongau, is low on major sights. It is mostly visited as the starting point for some of the best hiking routes in the region, including scaling the first Alpine peak Hoher Peißenberg (988 m/3,240 ft) and the King Ludwig II route through the Ammergorge (see *Adventures*).

The **Pfarrkirche St Michael** (Parish Church), ☎ 08861-6231, dates back in part to the mid-12th century when Duke Welf IV erected a new castle and church in the town. The church was altered through the centuries but received its final appearance in the 1780s when the interior was stripped of all Rococo decorations and redone in stark neo-Classical simplicity. Art and decorations are thus rather limited in comparison to the rich Baroque and Rococo interiors that typify churches in the region.

Rottenbuch

Tourist Information

Tourist-Informationsbüro, Klosterhof 36, 82401 Rottenbuch, ☎ 08867-1464, www.rottenbuch.de.

Sightseeing

The small village of Rottenbuch is dominated by the former Augustinian Monastery. It was founded in 1071 by Bavarian Duke Welf I and it owned the area up to secularization in 1803. Parts of the huge monastery were destroyed but, since 1963, the Don Bosco Order has run a school in the remaining buildings.

The main sight in town is the **Klosterstiftkirche** (Cloister Church). The original Romanesque church was replaced by a more modern Gothic building during the 15th century. This church received a major Rococo makeover during the mid-18th century. The ceiling frescoes are by Matthäus Günther, while the stuccos and altars are by Franz Xaver Schmädl. Opening hours are daily from 8 am to 7 pm, closing at 8 pm in summer.

Inside the Klosterstiftkirche

Steingaden

Tourist Information

Tourist Information, Krankenhausstraße 1, 86989 Steingaden, ☎ 08862-200, www.steingaden.de.

Sightseeing

Before rushing past Steingaden en route to the incredible Rococo Wieskirche, it is worth stopping in town to see the fine **Pfarrkirche St Johannes der Täufer** (Parish Church St John the Baptist). The church is also known as the Welfenmünster (Guelph Minster), as it was the abbey church of the Premonstratensian monastery founded here by Duke Welf IV in 1147. Despite various alterations throughout the centuries, the exterior of the church is still clearly the Romanesque original completed in 1176. The interior was altered to Gothic in the late 15th century – note the portal with the Welf genealogy and vaulting in the otherwise Romanesque cloisters. Following damage during the Peasants' War, the interior was redone in the Renaissance style – the choir stalls date from this period. A century later, following the Thirty Years' War, a new interior was needed and done in High Baroque – the stuccowork in the choir is a fine example. In 1747, the nave received a Rococo makeover. Most of the monastery was destroyed following secularization in 1803 but the church survived by becoming the parish church for the local community. It is open daily from 8 am to 5 pm, closing at 7 pm in summer. Admission is free.

Die Wieskirche

The Wieskirche

The magnificent Wieskirche (Church in the Meadow), Wies 12, 86989 Steingaden, ☎ 08862-932-930, www.wieskirche.de, is generally seen as the definitive Rococo church in southern Bavaria. This glorious construction in a meadow, literally in the middle of nowhere, is a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site.

The Wieskirche (1745-54) was designed by master Rococo architect and stucco artist Dominikus Zimmermann (1685-1766). His equally talented brother, Johann Baptist Zimmermann (1680-1758), did much of the interior painting. The exterior is typical of a Rococo church – rather plain and serving mainly to keep the interior from falling apart. Approaching the Wieskirche from the parking lot a few hundred yards down a gentle hill, the pale yellow exterior reveals nothing of the glorious interior. Inside, the church is oval, with a narrow apse extension. The huge cupola is also oval and ideally suited for the Rococo painting of the *Second Coming*. The lower parts of the church, associated with earth, are sparsely decorated, at least for a Rococo church, and mostly white. The upper reaches represent heaven and are typical Rococo with stuccowork, paintings, and gilded decorations. The choir is a symphony of color, with frescoes, gilded stucco, statues, and marble balustrades. Large windows insure ample light and the church is best appreciated on a sunny day. Opening hours are daily from 8 am to 7 pm, closing at 5 pm in winter. Admission is free.

It is hard to imagine today how such a magnificent church could have been financed by such a small agricultural community. It was all due to a statue of Christ that was considered too pitiful for use in processions. In 1738, a farming couple saw this Christ in tears. Subsequent prayers were answered and the pilgrims and donations started to come in droves. This explains the official, if seldom used, name of the Wieskirche: Wahlfahrtskirche "Zum gegeißelten Heiland auf der Wies" (Pilgrims' Church of the Scourged Savior in the Meadow). It currently attracts around a million visitors annually. Dominikus Zimmermann saw the church as his greatest accomplishment and spent the last 10 years of his life in a small house almost at its doorstep.

Several series of concerts are held in the church, especially in summer. Each series is organized by different organizations – the details and where to buy tickets are available on the church's English-language website, www.wieskirche.de. Entrance to many concerts is free and no reservations are required.

The Wieskirche is three km/1.9 miles outside Steingaden and 50 km/31 miles north of Garmisch-Partenkirchen on a small country lane. It can be reached by bus from Füssen or Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Cultural Events

The **Förderverein**, Am Schwarzenbach 5, 86920 Denklingen, ☎ 08243-2783, www.foerderverein-fsw.de, arranges a series of concerts at venues in the region, including in the Wieskirche.

Further concerts are sponsored in the **Wieskirche** by various organizations. For details contact the Tourist Information office in Steingaden or the organizations listed on the Wieskirche website, www.wieskirche.de.

Musik im Pfaffenwinkel, Weinstraße 20, Im Haus der Volksbank, 86956 Schongau, ☎ 08861-93-580, www.musik-im-pfaffenwinkel.de, organizes several concerts at various venues in Pfaffenwinkel throughout the year.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

From May to October, on Friday at 4 pm, the tourist office in **Schongau** conducts guided walking tours of the Old Town.

Countryside Hikes

The Pfaffenwinkel, with its lovely natural surrounding, is a hikers' paradise. Several long-distance routes cross through the area and numerous shorter routes can be enjoyed. Two popular routes, usually done in around a week, are both just over 120 km/75 miles long and end in Füssen. The **König Ludwigweg** (King Ludwig Route), www.koenig-ludwig-weg.de, starts from Berg on the Starnberg Lake where the king died, while the **Lech Höhenweg** follows the flow of the Lech River from Augsburg. **Alpenlandtouristik**, Postfach 101313, 86899 Landsberg, ☎ 08191-308-620, www.alpenlandtouristik.de, arranges packages with accommodations and luggage transfers on these and other routes in the region.

Two popular shorter routes start in Peiting. The **Hoher Peißenberg**, just outside the town, is the first Alpine peak when approaching from the north. The 988-m/3,240-ft peak is a fairly easy hike with fantastic views of the Alps and of the numerous lakes in the region. It takes four hours, starting from central Peiting to the top and down again, including the 10-minute return by rail from the Hohenpeißenberg station.

The other lovely hike is along the King Ludwig Route from Peiting to Rottenbuch via the dramatic **Ammer gorge**, also a bit wishfully known as the Grand Canyon of Upper Bavaria. Note that many of the bridges and stairs in the gorge are without safety railings. It takes just over three hours if returning from Rottenbuch by bus.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Numerous cycling routes ranging from easy to very challenging are available in the region. Peiting and Schongau, with their rail connections, are good starting points, since returns by rail make circular routes unnecessary. The circular **Kunst und Natur** (Art and Nature) route from Peiting via Rottenbuch, the Wieskirche, and Steingaden is around 50 km/31 miles long.

Bicycle rentals are available in **Schongau** from **Radsport Lerf**, Bernbeurer Straße 10, ☎ 08861-2664, in **Peiting** from **Fahrrad Sailer**, Ammergauer Straße 1, ☎ 08861-6379, and in **Steingaden** from the **Tourist-Information**, Krankenhausstraße 1, ☎ 08862-200.

Adventures in the Air

Hot-Air Ballooning

Skygate Ballonfahrten, Brüder-Zimmermann Straße 4, 86989 Steingaden, ☎ 08862-932-424, www.skygate-ballonfahrten.de, offers balloon flights in the region with occasional crossings of the Alps.

Parachuting

For parachuting and tandem jumps, contact **Bavaria**, Alte Hammerschmiede 11, Peiting, ☎ 08861-67-297.

Schwangau & Füssen

Allgäu once had close to 250 castles. Most were built in the 12th and 13th centuries and at least 60 survive in some form, from modernized palaces to pitiful ruins. Schloss Neuschwanstein in Schwangau may not have served any strategic purpose, is barely 120 years old, and is a romantic royal fantasy, but it is arguably the most famous castle in Germany. It inspired Disney and despite its lack of medieval authenticity is the one castle people cross oceans to see.

Getting Around

Schloss Neuschwanstein is a popular daytrip from Munich and other larger towns. At least hourly trains connect Munich Hauptbahnhof with Füssen in just over two hours. Some trains require transfers at Buchloe. Hourly trains from Augsburg take just under two hours and often require transfers at Buchloe. From Füssen train station, take any bus marked *Königschlösser* to Schwangau. Alternatively, it is a five-km/three-mile hike from Füssen to Hohenschwangau or a taxi would cost around €15.

Limited buses are available from Füssen and Schwangau to the Wieskirche, Oberammergau, Ettal, and Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

From Munich, a good option would be a guided bus tour. It cuts out the hassle of getting tickets in advance and some, such as **Autobus-Oberbayern**, Heidemannstraße 220, ☎ 089-323-040, www.autobusoberbayern.de, offer day-tours that include both Schloss Neuschwanstein and Schloss Linderhof – something that is impossible to do in one day on public transportation.

A more active tour is offered by **Discover Bavaria**, Hochbrückenstraße, ☎ 089-2554-3987, www.mikesbiketours.com. It includes a hike up the Pöllat Gorge, a visit to Schloss Neuschwanstein, a bike tour, and a swim in the lake if weather allows. The tour is available most days from mid-April to September.

By car, Füssen is a just over 100 km/60 miles from Munich and a bit more than an hour's drive from Garmisch-Partenkirchen.

Schwangau

Near Füssen, this is a small town in an idyllic location that caught the eye of the Bavarian royals during the 19th century. First King Maximilian II built a hunting castle here and then Mad King Ludwig erected the fantasy castle Schloss Neuschwanstein. Visitors come from all over the world to see this magical folly.

Schloss Neuschwanstein attracts 1.3 million visitors annually, making it one of the most popular tourist destinations in Germany. Another sight is Schloss Hohenschwangau where Ludwig spent much of his youth. Although much of the small town near the castles is geared to mass tourism, the area has some outstanding natural beauty, making it worth staying for longer than the flood of day-trippers usually do.

Information Sources

Tourist Information Schwangau, Münchener Straße 2, 87645 Schwangau, ☎ 08362-81-980, www.schwangau.de.

Sightseeing

Schloss Neuschwanstein

Both **Schloss Neuschwanstein** and **Schloss Hohenschwangau** are open daily from April to September, 9 am to 5 pm, and from October to March, 10 am to 4 pm. Admission to each is €9 or €17 for both on the same day. The ticket office is in town and not at the castles themselves.

Tickets can be bought in person or online from **Ticketcenter Neuschwanstein–Hohenschwangau**, Alpseestraße 12, 87645 Hohenschwangau, ☎ 08362-930-830, fax 08362-930-8320, www.ticket-center-hohenschwangau.de. Reserved tickets cost €1.60 extra but are worth it. The tickets need to be picked up at the ticket center in town but a special counter is set apart for reserved tickets.

Schloss Neuschwanstein

This was the ultimate fantasy castle of King Ludwig II. It was built between 1869 and 1886 in the Historicist style to resemble a medieval knight's castle. Much of the exterior is neo-Romanesque and it does look magical, high on a hill against an Alpine background. The briefest of glances tells you where Disney's castle came from.

The interior, which can only be seen on a guided tour, mostly resembles scenes from Wagnerian operas such as *Tannhäuser* and *Lohengrin*. The Singers' Hall is a smaller copy of the one in the Wartburg near Eisenach and its walls are decorated with scenes from *Parzival*. Only about 20 rooms are on view, as the castle was never completed. King Ludwig spent less than six months here.

Several routes lead to the top of the hill where Schloss Neuschwanstein is perched. The most interesting one goes up through the Pöllatschlucht (Pöllat Gorge). Others go more directly and are less strenuous. Walking up requires 20 to 45 minutes, depending on the route chosen. It is also possible to take a minibus or horse-drawn carriage to the top.

The best views of the castle are from the Marienbrücke (Mary Bridge), which is 45 m/148 ft above the Pöllat waterfall, and absolutely worth the 15-minute walk from the castle. (Note that the hike that continues on the far side of this bridge is beautiful, but it takes several hours.)

Schloss Hohenschwangau

The other royal castle in Schwangau, Schloss Hohenschwangau, was also built in a Historicist style but by Maximilian II in 1832-36. It is a neo-Gothic building with wall paintings of German sagas. Ludwig spent happy childhood years here and was almost certainly influenced by what he saw on these walls. He also first met Richard Wagner here. The interior can only be seen on a guided tour, which generally is less fully booked than those for Neuschwanstein.

Schloss Hohenschwangau

Füssen

Füssen has a lovely location on the banks of the Lech River with the Alps almost in touching distance. During the third century, the Romans had the military camp called Foetibus here but modern history really started during the eighth century when the St Gallen monk Magnus selected Füssen as his base for converting the Allgäu to Christianity. The Benedictine Monastery of St Mang followed a century later and since then the town has been an important religious center. From 1313 up to secularization in 1803, Füssen was under the control of the Bishopric of Augsburg.

The town had an important location on the trade routes through the Alps and along the Lech. Economically, its golden age was during the 15th and 16th centuries – many buildings in the Old Town date from this period. Many received Baroque makeovers during the 18th century. Tourism started to become important following the construction of nearby Schloss Hohenschwangau during the 1830s but Schloss Neuschwanstein became an even bigger draw. The town is also the official end of the Romantic Route.

Emperor Maximilian I (1493-1519) visited Füssen 40 times, even though the imperial fortress of Ehrenberg was only 15 km/10 miles down the road. Officially, as friend of the bishop, he enjoyed the hunting grounds but, as he was also chronically short of funds, rumor had it that as a guest he simply lived more cheaper.

Information Sources

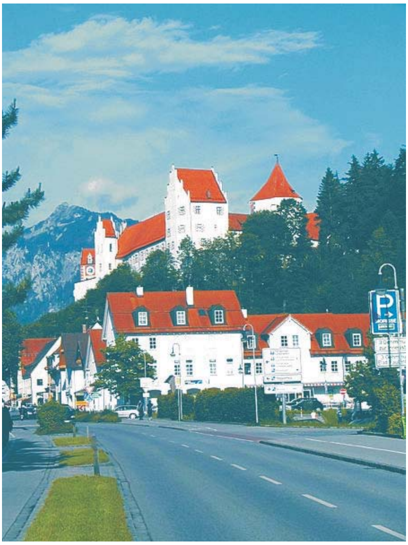
Füssen Tourismus und Marketing, Kaiser-Maximilian-Platz 1, 87629 Füssen, ☎ 08362-93-850, fax 08362-938-520, www.fuessen.de.

Sightseeing

Most visitors rush from Füssen station straight to the castles in Schwangau and miss out on its lovely Old Town, complete with a castle that far exceeds the more famous two in historical importance. Large sections of the defensive walls and several watch towers survive.

It is a short stroll from the station to **Reichenstraße**, the center of the Old Town. The street is lined with mostly 15th- and 16th-century buildings and many cafés. The **Krippkirche St Nikolaus** was designed by Johann Georg Herkomer and completed in 1718. The High Altar is the work of Dominikus Zimmermann.

On a slight hill, the **Hohe Schloss** (High Castle), Magnusplatz 10, ☎ 08362-903-164, was started by Bavarian Duke Ludwig the Strict during the 13th century but most of the present building dates from around 1500. It is an important example of Late Gothic architecture, with an interesting courtyard that has an illusionist painted façade. In addition to the rich staterooms, a visit to the castle includes the mostly Gothic works of the **Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlung** (Bavarian State Gallery) and 19th-century art of the **Städtische Gemäldegalerie** (Municipal Paintings Gallery). Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from April to October, 11 am to 4 pm,, and November to March from 2 to 4 pm. Admission is €2.56 (or €3.07 in combination with the Town Museum).



Hohe Schloss *(Patrick Huebgen)*

Below the castle, on the bank of the river is the former **Kloster St Mang** (Monastery). It traces its history to St Magnus who started the conversion of the Allgäu from here in the mid-eighth century. The present Italian Baroque buildings are early 18th century and designed by Johann Georg Herkomer. The Baroque rooms of the monastery can be seen in conjunction with a visit to the **Museum der Stadt Füssen**, Lechhalde 3, ☎ 08362-903-145. The most impressive room is the rich **Fürstensaal**, which is often used for concerts. The crypt of the **Klosterkirche** (Abbey Church) dates from the time of St Magnus. It has the oldest wall paintings in Bavaria, from around 1000, but these can only be seen on a guided tour of the complex. The foundations of the **St Annakapelle** (St Anne's Chapel) are from the ninth century but it is most famous for a series of 20 paintings completed in 1602 by Jakob Hiebeler, considered the oldest *Totentanz* (Dance of Death) cycle painted in Bavaria. In addition to the history of the monastery and the town, the museum has an impressive musical instruments collection. During the Renaissance, Füssen was an important center for the manufacturing of lutes and violins. (Vio-

St Mang *(Myke Rosenthal-)*

lins are still produced in Mittenwald near Garmisch-Partenkirchen). Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from April to October, 11 am to 4 pm, and November to March from 2 to 4 pm. Admission is €2.56 (or €3.07 in combination with the State Gallery).

At the eastern edge of the Old Town is the former **Franziskanerkloster** (Franciscan Monastery). This is the official end of the Romantic Route. More interesting than the sign over the gate is the view from here of the Old Town, castle, and monastery.

Cultural Events

Ludwig^2 - Das neue Musical, Im Festspielhaus Neuschwanstein, Im See 1, 87629 Füssen, ☎ 0180-513-1132, www.ludwigmusical.com, is a musical on the life and death of King Ludwig II. It is part love story, part political crime thriller. The 1,400-seat theater, with the largest revolving stage in Germany and a 90,000-liter/24,000-gallon water tank, is dramatically located on the banks of the Foggernsee, across the water from from Schwangau and Schloss Neuschwanstein. Up to eight performances per week are scheduled. Backstage tours are available at 11 am on days with afternoon performances and at 4 pm on days with only evening performances.

Concerts are held each September in the **Sängersaal in Schloss Neuschwanstein**. Tickets go on sale from the first Monday in February and the schedule is available from the tourist office starting in January.

The **Fürstensaal** in the Schloss in Füssen is frequently used for concerts ranging from classical music to jazz. The program and tickets are available through the tourist office.

Alphorns are blown at the Alpsee from May to September on Monday at 8 pm.

Adventures on Foot

Countryside Hikes

The natural beauty of the area invites hiking. A popular hike is from Schwangau up the Pöllat Gorge, over the Marienbrücke with views of Schloss Neuschwanstein, and then onwards through the mountains to the Bergstation of the Tegelberg cable car. From here, take the cable car or, more interestingly, follow the Schutzengel (Guardian Angel) route back to the valley. The walk takes three to five hours.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

A popular cycling route is the 32 km/19 miles around the **Forggensee**. You are allowed to take bicycles on the lake boats, although space is limited. Cycling to the **Wieskirche** is also popular.

Many hotels have bicycles available for guests but otherwise try **Aktiv Flugschule**, An der Tegelbergbahn-Talstation, ☎ 08362-921-457; **Auto Köpf**, Münchner Straße 11, ☎ 08362-930-271; or **Campingplatz Bannwaldsee**, ☎ 08362-93-000.

Adventures in the Air

Cable Cars

The **Tegelbergbahn**, 87645 Schwangau, ☎ 08362-98-360, www.tegelbergbahn.de, uses an enclosed cable car to hoist passengers from Schwangau's 820-m/2,690-ft altitude to the Tegelberg peak at 1,720 m/5,641 ft. The Bergstation is the starting point for many popular hikes. In winter, a downhill ski slope is available. It operates daily from 9 am to 4:30 pm. A round-trip ticket is €15 or €9 one-way. Day-tickets are available for skiers.

The **Doppelsesselbahn Buching**, 87642 Buching, ☎ 08368-91-250, www.buchenbergbahn-buching.de, is a double-seat lift that transports visitors to 1,140 m/3,740 ft. In summer, the area is popular for hiking and in winter for cross-county and alpine skiing, as well as a tobogganing course.

Hot-Air Ballooning

Balloon flights are arranged by **Bavaria Ballonfahrten**, Hitzleriederstraße 15, 87637 Seeg, ☎ 08364-986-068.

Paragliding

For tandem flights from the Tegelberg, contact **Aktiv Flugschule**, Tegelbergstraße 33, 87645 Schwangau, ☎ 08362-921-457, www.flugschule-aktiv.de.

Adventures on Water

From the mid-20th century, the Lech has been dammed annually between mid-June and October to form the Forggensee, the fifth-largest lake in Bavaria. The main purpose of the dam is flood control but it also allows for various water activities while flooded. The smaller lakes in the region are also freely accessible for swimming and various non-motorized watersports.

Boat Rental

Rowboats and pedal boats can be rented without reservations at the **Bootsverleih Alpsee**, ☎ 08362-8782, or from the **Campingplatz Bannwaldsee**, ☎ 08362-93-000. A larger selection, including windsurfers, sailboats, canoes, and family-size kayaks, is available from **Surfschule Forggensee** in Brunnen, ☎ 08362-924-386.

Lake Boats

Städtische Forggensee-Schifffahrt, ☎ 08362-921-363, www.fuessen.de, operates lake boats on the Forggensee from mid-June to early October. Excursions last from 50 minutes to two hours.

Adventures on Snow & Ice

Alpine Skiing

The **Allgäu-Tirol Vitales Land**, www.vitalesland.com, is the ski area encompassing not only the area around Schwangau, but also other mountains in the region and in Austria – 82 ski lifts and 145 km/87 miles of downhill slopes are available. In Schwangau, in addition to the Tegelbergbahn, another four ski lifts operate near the Talstation. A Vitales Land ski pass costs €48 for two days.

Cross-Country Skiing

The Füssen area is considered one of the best in Germany for cross-country skiers. In Füssen alone, 60 km/36 miles of cross-country trails are open at no charge.

An interesting trail is the 2½-km/1.6-mile **Alpe Ebene** at an altitude of 1,150 m/3,772 ft on the Buchenberge. It allows cross-country skiing at a high altitude with wonderful views and guaranteed snow while the lower regions are still green.

Ice Skating

Ice skating is possible at the indoor rink in Füssen. The **Eisstadion**, ☎ 08362-50-750, is open daily but closed from the end of April to end of June.

Tobogganing

A summer tobogganing course operates daily at the **Tegelberg-Talstation** from 10 am to 6 pm if weather allows.

In winter, the 2½-km/1.6-mile-long Buchenberg tobogganing course from the top station of the **Buching Doppelsesselbahn** is lit at night up to 10 pm. Rental slides are available.

Ski Schools

Schischule Tegelberg, Unterdorf 12, ☎ 08362-8455, has courses in downhill and cross-country skiing as well as in snowboarding.

Cross-country skiing courses are also available from **Skilanglaufschule Ostallgäu**, Weidachstraße 54, Füssen, ☎ 08362-6464.

Snowboardschule Xaver Henke, Forggenseestraße 15, Halblech, ☎ 0177-466-6416, specializes in snowboarding courses.

Equipment Rentals

In addition to the ski schools, equipment can be rented from **Armin's Sporthäusle**, Füssener Straße 20, ☎ 08362-81-198; **Ski-Luggi**, An der Tegelberg-Talstation, ☎ 08362-983-651; and **Sport-Roman**, Münchner Straße 12, ☎ 08362-8963.

Where to Stay & Eat

Schwangau

The **Lisl Schlosshotel und Jägerhaus** are close to Schloss Hohenschwangau. The Jägerhaus is by far the more luxurious but both are very comfortable. Many rooms have views of the castle. The **Wittelsbacher** (€-€€) serves international cuisine and hearty local dishes at pleasantly low prices. Neuschwansteinerstraße 1, 87645 Hohenschwangau, ☎ 08362-8870, fax 08362-81-107, www.lisl.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The early 20th-century **Hotel Müller** is directly below Schloss Hohenschwangau. Most of the individually furnished rooms have balconies or terrace access. Some suites are very luxurious. Alpseestraße 16, 87645 Hohenschwangau, ☎ 08362-81-990, fax 08362-819-913, www.hotel-mueller.de. (€€€-€€€€)

The **Alpenhotel Meier** is a small, 12-bedroom pension. Rooms are comfortable and some have balconies. The rustic **restaurant** (€-€€) serves international cuisine, as well as hearty local specialties. Schwangauer Straße 37, 87645 Hohenschwangau, ☎/fax 08362-81-889, www.alpenhotel-allgaeu.de. (€€)

Hotel Müller

Füssen

The modern **Treff Hotel Luitpoldpark** is in the center of town, a block from the station. It has modern, stylish rooms with marble baths. The upmarket **Kurfürst von Bayern** (€€-€€€) serves international and local specialties. **El Bandito** (€-€€) serves Tex-Mex, while the **Wiener Café** (€-€€) has a piano bar and terrace. Luitpoldstraße, 87629 Füssen, ☎ 08362-9040, fax 08362-904-678, www.luitpoldpark-hotel.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Hotel Sommer

The **Hotel Sommer** is at the edge of town and has spectacular views of Schloss Neuschwanstein and the Allgäu Alps. Rooms are mostly spacious, modern, and comfortable. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves local and international cuisine. Weidacherstraße 74, 87629 Füssen, ☎ 08362-91-470, fax 08362-917-714, www.landhaus-sommer.de. (€€€-€€€€)

Hotel Kurcafé is in the heart of town close to the station. Rooms are airy and large, with modern furniture. The **restaurant** (€€) has dark wood paneling and serves continental cuisine, while fantastic cakes are available in the **Konditorei**. Prinzregentenplatz, 87629 Füssen, ☎ 08362-930-180, fax 08362-930-1850, www.kurcafe.com. (€€-€€€)

The rustic **Restaurant Zum Schwanen**, Brotmarkt 4, ☎ 08362-6174, is in the heart of the Old Town close to the former monastery. It serves excellent regional specialties. (€-€€)

The stylish **Alpenschlößle** serves regional specialties as well as international dishes with strong French influences. It is at the edge of the forest in the Bad Faulenbach part of town. Primarily known for its restaurant, it also has 12 individually furnished rooms (€€). Alatseestraße 28, 87629 Füssen, ☎ 08362-4017, fax 08362-39-847, hotel-alpenschloessle@t-online.de. (€-€€€)

Youth Hostels

The very popular **DJH Füssen** is a km/half-mile west of the train station, away from the Old Town. It is closed from mid-November to just after Christmas. Mariahilferstraße 5, 87629 Füssen, ☎ 08362-7754, fax 08362-2770.

Camping

Campingplatz Bannwaldsee is beautifully located next to the Bannwald Lake. It has on-site bicycle and boat rentals, a natural beach and is close to ski areas. There are 520 lots for tourists and another 190 for long-term campers. It is open year-round. Münchner Straße 151, 87645 Schwangau, ☎ 08362-93-000, fax 08362-930-020, www.camping-bannwaldsee.de.

Camping Brunnen is right next to the Forggensee Lake, only four km/2½ miles from Neuschwanstein. It has excellent facilities and many shady lots. There are 230 lots for tourists and 70 for long-term campers. It is open from late December to early November. Seestraße

81, 87645 Schwangau, 8273, fax 08362-8630, www.camping-brunnen.de.

Camping Hopfensee is a first-class campsite with excellent facilities. It is open from mid-December to early November, with its own ski lift and direct access to 36 miles of cross-country skiing trails. It has 380 lots. 87629 Füssen, ☎ 08362-917-710, fax 08362-917-720, www.camping-hopfensee.com.

Allgäu

The Allgäu is a lovely area very popular with vacationers. At its southern end are the spectacularly beautiful Bavarian Alps while most of the region comprises rolling hills and green meadows.

The sights most popular with foreign visitors are the fairy tales castles of King Ludwig, described in the previous section, but the region has much more to offer. Kempten is the largest town in the region, with interesting sights dating back to the Roman era. The Oberallgäu (Upper Allgäu) is most famous for its mountains, which are popular with hikers in summer and skiers in summer. The Unterallgäu (Lower Allgäu) is without mountains but if you see only one monastery in Bavaria make it Ottobeuren, with its magnificent Rococo church.

Kempten

Kempten is sometimes referred to as the Allgäu metropolis, though it has under 70,000 inhabitants. Towns in the region tend to be small to very small and the lovely natural surroundings are the main reason for its popularity with tourists.

Kempten has a colorful history full of violence, often homebred. It is one of the oldest towns in Germany. In AD 18, the Greek historian and geographer Strabon referred to Kempten (as well as Augsburg and Regensburg) as the most impressive towns in the Roman province of Raetia. Around 15 BC, the Romans took over a Celtic town here and built their own city of Combodunum on the right bank of the Iller River. During the third century, Alemanni attacks forced the Romans to abandon the town and they withdrew to a fort on the left bank of the Burghalde river. In 488, the Romans finally abandon the region. During the seventh century, the Franks destroyed the Alemanni settlement and by the mid-eighth century, monks from St Gallen founded a monastery here from where they Christianized the Allgäu. The monastery received a large donation from Hildegard of Swabia, the second wife of Charlemagne. During the 10th century, Hungarian attacks forced the monastery to relocate to its present location.

A town grew adjacent to the monastery and became a free imperial city in 1289. Town and monastery developed independently and not necessarily in peace. The town, but not the monastery, accepted the Lutheran Reformation during the 16th century, which set the stage for mutual destruction during the Thirty Years' War. The town used Swedish assistance to destroy the monastery area while the monastery received Imperial assistance to demolish the Lutheran town. In addition, plague and hunger saw the town's population decline from 6,000 before to only 900 at the end of the war. The monastery area recovered faster, erected some of the first major post-Thirty Years' War buildings in Bavaria, and legally became an independent town in the early 18th century. Only after both towns became Bavarian in 1803 were they forced to become a single entity. The centuries of division can still easily be seen in the different architectural styles of the Old Town.

Tourist Office

Tourist Information Kempten, Rathausplatz 24, 87435 Kempten, ☎ 0831-252-5237, www.kempten.de.

Getting Around

Kempten has good railway connections as it is on the crossing of the Munich-Lindau, Ulm-Obertdorf, and Kempten-Reutte (Austria) railway lines.

Sightseeing

Kempten Rathausplatz (TCY)

Most of the sights in Kempten are in the Old Town on the left bank of the Iller River. The **Burghalde** is on the small hill directly south of the Old Town. The Romans erected a fort here during the third century. Several more castles were built later, but the current ruins and Gothic tower date from the late 15th century. The ruins are a popular outdoor stage and have fine views. The small **Allgäuer Burgenmuseum** (Castle Museum), ☎ 0831-512-1468, recently opened on the hill, with information on the development of castles in the region. The museum places great emphasis on making displays accessible to children. It is open weekends only from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €2.

The original monastery was on **St-Mang-Platz** and it is also the origin of the later civilian town. The **Pfarrkirche St Mang** (Parish Church) is an early 15th-century Gothic church with minor Baroque elements. Its tower is 66 m/216 ft high. The Art-Nouveau fountain on the square is from 1905. In **Mühlberg**, behind the church, are several Gothic buildings from the 13th to 15th centuries. No. 12, erected in 1289, is the oldest building in town. In **Bäckerstraße** are buildings from the 17th and 18th centuries, as well as the **Ankertörle**, the only surviving town gate.

The most impressive buildings in the civilian town are on **Rathausplatz** (Town Hall Square). The **Rathaus** (Town Hall) itself is partly from the 14th century, but the current building was only completed in 1987. The cores of most buildings here are medieval despite the Baroque and Rococo façades. At the western end of the square is the **Schlössle**, a Renaissance palace. The flight of stairs adjacent to it was built in the early 20th century to finally connect the secular and sacral towns both physically and visually.

It is impossible to miss the architectural changes once you enter the former monastery town. The huge **Residenz**, Am Stadtpark 3, ☎ 0831-256-251, www.schloesser.bayern.de, was the first Baroque monastery complex in Bavaria and served as inspiration and example for numerous others. Its external dimensions are 145 by 43 m/475 by 140 ft. It has two huge courtyards – half of the building served as Benedictine monastery and the other half as residence and offices of the prince-abbot. The regal interior can only be seen on guided tours, which include the throne, bed, and audience rooms. Tours start every 45 minutes from the west wing, Tuesday to Sunday from April to September, 9 am to 5 pm, October, 10 am to 5 pm, and November to March on Saturday only, 10 am to 5 pm. Admission is €3.

Adjacent to the Residenz is the **St Lorenz Basilika**. This was the first large church constructed in southern Germany following the Thirty Years' War. Construction of the triple-nave Baroque church started in 1652 and it was erected at great physical strain and financial expense to the subjects of the prince abbot. The exterior impresses with a monumental façade, two towers (only completed in 1900) and huge octagonal dome. The Baroque interior enchants with its Scagliola slabs, Rococo altars, and impressively carved choir stalls.

St Lorenz Basilica (Tilman)

Behind the Residenz is the pleasant **Hofgarten** (Court Gardens). At the north end is the 1780 **Orangery** that now houses the municipal library. At the west, in the former Baroque Marstall (Royal Stables) is the **Alpinmuseum** (Alpine Museum), Landwehrstraße 4, ☎ 0831-252-5740. This is the largest Alpine museum in Europe, with exhibitions covering the geological development, fauna and flora, as well as human settlement of the Alps. A subsection of the museum is the **Alpenländische Galerie** (Alpine Region Gallery), displaying mostly sacral art from the late Middle Ages. Opening hours are mid-March to mid-November, Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €2.50.

Kornhaus *(Tilman)*

In the nearby former **Kornhaus** (Granary), with its imposing three-floor clouted gable from around 1700, is the **Allgäu-Museum**, Große Kornhausplatz 1, ☎ 0831-540-2120. It has six floors on the art, culture, and history of Kempten and the region. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €2.50.

In the neo-Classical **Zumsteinhaus** (1802), Residenzplatz 31, ☎ 0831-12-367, are two museums. The **Römische Museum** (Roman Museum) has exhibits of Roman artifacts excavated in Kempten. The **Naturkundemuseum** (Natural History) on the upper floors has fossils, minerals and stones, as well as exhibits on the geology of the Allgäu Alps. Opening hours are limited to Thursday and Sunday from April to October, 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm. Admission is €2.

On the opposite right bank of the Iller is the **Archäologischer Park Cambodunum** (Archeological Park), Cambodunumweg 3, ☎ 0831-770-650, on the site of the original Roman town. The excavations have two main sections that include a partly restored temple and the foundations and some walls of a Roman bath. Nearby and freely accessible at all times are some foundations of the forum. The area is also worth visiting for the lovely old-town panoramas that can be enjoyed from here. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday from mid-March to mid-December, 10 am to 4:30 pm, closing at 5 pm from May to October. Admission is €3.

Cultural Events

A cultural highlight is the **Kemptner Jazz-Frühling** (Jazz Spring), Vogtstraße 8, ☎ 0831-29-276, www.klecks.de. It is an important weeklong jazz festival held annually at the end of April and early May.

The **open-air theater** on the Burghalde can seat around 1,500 and is frequently used in summer for a variety of events ranging from films to rock concerts. Concerts are also staged in summer in the Archeological Park.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

The **tourist office** conducts guided walking tours of the Old Town Saturday at 11 am. Other thematic walks are available at various times throughout the year.

Where to Stay & Eat

See pages 50 and 52 for hotel and restaurant price codes.

The **Hotel Bayerischer Hof** is on the opposite bank of the Iller from the Old Town but still within easy walking distance. Rooms are large and individually furnished using a combination of stylish modern, country-house, and more traditional furniture. The **restaurant** (€€) has several rooms, including a vaulted cellar, and serves local as well as international cuisine. Füssener Straße 96, 87437 Kempten, ☎ 0831-57-180, fax 0831-571-8100, www.bayerischerhof-kempten.de. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Bayerischer Hof

The very modern glass-and-steel **Parkhotel Kempten** is at the southern edge of the Old Town and farther from the station than the street address may suggest. The hotel forms part of a shopping center. The rooms are very large and bright, using modern furniture. The **Skyline** (€-€€) on the 13th floor is reached via an external glass elevator and offers grand views of Kempten. Bahnhofstraße 1, 87435 Kempten, ☎ 0831-25-275, fax 0831-2527-777, www.parkhotelkempten.de. (€€-€€€)

Der Fürstenhof is centrally located on the Rathausplatz in a palace with a history dating back to the 12th century. Rooms use mostly English-style antique furniture. The historical rooms are larger and face the square. Rathausplatz 8, 87435 Kempten im Allgäu, ☎ 0831-25-360, fax 0831-253-6120, www.fuerstenhof-kempten.de. (€€)

Hotel Peterhof is to the west of the Old Town within easy walking distance of the main sights. Rooms are modern and functional. The **restaurant** (€-€€) serves local and international food. Salzstraße 1, 87435 Kempten, ☎ 0831-52-440, fax 0831-524-4200, www.hotelpeterhof.de. (€€)

The stylish **M&M**, Mozartstraße 8, ☎ 0831-26-369, is the top dining choice in town. Food ranges from nouvelle cuisine to classical French and Middle Eastern dishes. Reservations are advisable. (€€-€€€)

It is worth going the few blocks south of the Old Town to dine in the **Haubenschloss**, Haubenschlossstraße 37, ☎ 0831-23-510. The restaurant is in a small patrician palace dating from the 14th century and has its own small park. Food is mostly regional and international dishes. (€€)

The Art Nouveau **Tableau**, Fischersteige 6, ☎ 0831-28-659, is in the heart of the Old Town. A wide range of dishes are available, including a large Mediterranean selection. (€-€€€)

Zum Stift, Stiftplatz 1, ☎ 083122-388, is in a small former palace across from the basilica. Food is mostly hearty local cuisine served in either the rustic hall or a very pleasant courtyard beer garden. (€€)

Weinstube Schnitzer, Rathausplatz 13, ☎ 0831-29-402, is primarily a wine dealer but serves hearty dishes on its terrace when the weather allows. The food is mostly regional and the wine selection not surprisingly vast. (€)

Camping

Camping Öschlesee, seven km/4.3 miles south of Kempten, has excellent facilities. With 200 lots and open year-round, it is close to a small lake. 87477 Sulzberg, ☎ 08376-93-040, fax 08376-93-041, www.camping.oeschlesee.de.

Unterallgäu

The Unterallgäu (Lower Allgäu) is a small region at the far north of the Allgäu. Being so far north and removed from the Alps, it has the least typical Allgäu landscape. However, Memmingen is an interesting town and the monastery in Ottobeuren is the finest in Bavaria.

Information Sources

Tourist Office

Kneippland Unterallgäu, Postfach 1362, 87713 Mindelheim, ☎ 08261-995-375, fax 08261-995-333, http://tourismus.unterallgaeu.de.

Getting Around

Memmingen is at the crossing of the Ulm-Kempten and Munich-Lindau railway lines and thus has good connections to all major areas.

Memmingen

Memmingen, a town of 42,000, seems at first glance disappointingly industrial and modern. However, it has a lovely Old Town center and several very interesting sights nearby.

Memmingen's favorable location at the crossing of trade routes led to a settlement in Roman times. A town was established by Alemanni tribes around 500. Memmingen was a free imperial City from 1268 up to 1803 when it became part of Bavaria. In 1525, during the Peasants' Revolt, a large meeting of the Allgäu revolutionaries drew up the *Zwölf Artikel der Bauern* (12 Articles of the Peasants), which is often seen as the first European declaration of human rights. During the Thirty Years' War, Memmingen, which adopted the Lutheran Reformation early, was occupied by the Imperial army, with Wallerstein having his headquarters here for four months prior to his dismissal. Swedish King Gustav stayed in the town two years later.

Tourist Office

Stadtinformation, Marktplatz 3, 87700 Memmingen, ☎ 08331-850-172, www.memmingen.de.

Old Town

About 2½ km/1.6 miles of the original 4 km/2½ miles of town walls from the 13th to 15th centuries survive, together with five of the original 37 towers and gates. The heart of the Old Town is the Marktplatz. The Renaissance **Rathaus** (Town Hall) has an 18th-century Rococo façade with several turrets. The **Steuerhaus** (former Tax Office) with Italian arcades is partly late 15th century, but the two upper floors were

Memmingen

Memmingen Steuerhaus

added in the early 18th century. The neo-Rococo façade was only completed in 1909. The **Großzunft** with its three-floor gables was erected in 1719 by the patricians in the town as a meeting place and party house.

A block north is the pink **Parishaus**, Ulmer Straße 9. This was the first Baroque house in town and erected in 1736 by the wealthy Paris trading family. It now houses a gallery of works by local painter Max Unold, who belonged to the Neue Sachlichkeit movement.

To the east of the Marktplaztz, in the **Hermansbau**, a Late Baroque palace erected in 1766, is the **Stadtmuseum** (Town Museum), Zangmeisterstraße 8, ☎ 08331-850-134. It focuses on local history with special emphasis on life in the free imperial city. It also has a gallery of works by local Baroque artist Johann Heiss (1640-1704). Opening hours are May to October, Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm and Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €2.

Across the road is the **Stadtpfarrkirche St Martin** (Parish Church), Zwanmeisterstraße 13, ☎ 08331-856-910. It is partly from the 12th century but frequently enlarged, with the Gothic choir added around 1500 to designs of Matthias Böblinger, architect of the Ulm Cathedral. The choir stalls, carved by a local workshop 1501-07, are among the most significant Late Gothic woodcarvings in the region. The 15th- and 16th-century frescoes are by the Strigel family. The octagonal top half of the 66-m/217-ft-high tower was added in 1537. The tower can be climbed for fine views daily at 3 pm from May to October. The church is open daily from Easter to October, 10 am to 5 pm, closing at 4 pm in April and October.

The four-wing, 15th-century **Antonierhaus**, Martin-Luther-Platz 1, ☎ 08331-850-245, formerly housed a monastery and hospital of the Order of St Anthony. It now houses the town library as well as two museums. The **Antonitermuseum** (Antonine Museum) is on the history of the order with special focus on their activities in Memmingen. The **Strigel Museum** has several works as well as copies by members of this local artistic family. Opening hours are Tuesday to Saturday from 10 am to noon and 2 to 4 pm; Sunday from 10 am to 4 pm. Admission is €3.

Nearby is the impressive late 16th-century **Fuggerbau**. The size is a clear indication of how important the town must have been to the trading interests of the famous Fugger family from Augsburg. It is suitable for a king – Swedish King Gustav stayed here two years after his great adversary Wallerstein received his dismissal as commander of the Imperial Army while staying in the very building.

The 12 Articles of the Peasants' Revolt were drafted in the **Kramerzunft** (Grocers' Guild), the red building on Rossmarkt. Nearby is one of the town's most famous buildings – the **Siebendächerhaus** (House with Seven Roofs). It was built in 1601 and has airy lofts used by tanners to dry hides. It was rebuilt after complete destruction in World War II.

The **Frauenkirche** (Church of Our Dear Lady), Frauenkirchenplatz 4, ☎ 08331-2253, has a Romanesque core but its present Late Gothic appearance is from the 15th century. There are excellent frescoes here by Hans Strigel the Younger from this period. The wall and ceiling paintings were rediscovered in 1893 and are among the most important of their kind in Bavaria. Opening hours are weekdays from 9 am to noon. During summer, it is sometimes open in the afternoon too.

Nearby

Buxheim

In Buxheim, a mere four km/2½ miles northwest of Memmingen, is one of the largest and best-preserved Carthusian monasteries in Germany. The **Kartäuserkloster** (Carthusian Monastery), St Bruno Haus, 87740 Buxheim, ☎ 08331-61-804, was founded in 1402 and has a Gothic core. The order's strict rules (see *Tückelhausen* in the *Unterfranken* chapter) did not prevent them from employing the talented Zimmermann brothers to give the monastery a Baroque makeover. However, the absolute highlights are the carved choir stalls by Ignaz Waibel. Following secularization in 1803, these

Kartäuserkloster museum (Norbert Schnitzler) detoured into Germany, Holland, France, and England before returning to Buxheim in 1980. A visit to the monastery includes a small museum with monk's cells, the cloisters, the abbey church with the marvelous choir stalls, and the **Annakapelle** (St Anne's Chapel), another masterpiece by Dominikus Zimmermann. Opening hours are April to October daily from 10 am to noon and 2 to 5 pm. Admission is €2.50.

Adjacent to the monastery is the **Pfarrkirche St Peter und Paul** (Parish Church). It is the work of the Zimmermanns but the highlights are Gothic – the Buxheim Madonna (a clay figure from around 1420 in the left side altar) and *Pieta* from the same period in the right side altar.

Buxheim can be reached by Bus 964 (not on Sunday), but double-check return times. It is also within easy cycling, and even hiking distance from Memmingen.

Illerbeuren

In Illerbeuren-Kronburg is the very interesting **Schwäbisches Bauernhofmuseum Illerbeuren** (Swabian Open-Air Museum), Museumstraße 8, ☎ 08394-1455, www.bauernhofmuseum.de. The museum is in fact a little town with more than 30 historic farmhouses and related buildings moved here from various parts of Swabia, Allgäu, and Tirol. The buildings span four centuries and at times farming-related techniques are demonstrated. Opening hours are Tuesday to Sunday, 9 am to 5 pm from April to mid-October and 10 am to 4 pm in March and mid-October to November. Admission is €4.

In Illerbeuren-Legau is a Baroque jewel in the idyllically located **Wallfahrtskirche Maria Steinbach** (Pilgrimage Church), Kirchhof 4, 87764 Maria Steinbach, ☎ 08394-9240, www.maria-steinbach.de. A splinter of the cross has been a pilgrimage magnet since the 12th century but the present yellow Baroque church is from the mid-18th century. It is assumed that Dominikus Zimmermann had some influence on the design and decorations. The magnificent paintings by Franz Georg Hermann, as

Wallfahrtskirche Maria Steinbach *(Bene16)*

well as superb stuccowork and statues, combine in a spectacularly successful overall harmony. The main pilgrim draw is the *Schmerzhafte Muttergottes* (Grieving Madonna) statue from the early 18th century.

Illerbeuren is just over 12 km/7½ miles southwest of Memmingne and can be reached by Bus 966 (direction Legau) from Memmingen station (not on Sunday and limited services during school holidays!).

Ottobeuren

The tourism and cultural tour de force of Unterallgäu is Ottobeuren or, to be precise, the Benedictine monastery. It is a Baroque masterpiece worth a journey.

Tourist Information

Touristikamt Kur & Kultur Ottobeuren, Marktplatz 14, 87724 Ottobeuren, ☎ 08332-921-950, www.ottobeuren.de.

Sightseeing

The **Benediktinerabtei Ottobeuren** (Benedictine Abbey). Sebastian-Kneipp-Straße 1, ☎ 08332-7980, www.abtei-ottobeuren.de, is one of the largest and best-preserved monastery complexes in Germany. Its history goes back to 764 and it received large donations from Charlemagne. It had *Reichsunmittelbarkeit*, meaning that it was only subject to the Emperor, and operated as a small monastery state up to secularization in 1802. It reopened as a Benedictine monastery in 1834 and presently has 24 resident monks. It has generally been a successful establishment but never more so than during the reign of Abbot Rupert Neß von Wangen (1710-40). He ignored all recommendations of Christian modesty and converted the monastery into one of the largest Baroque complexes in Germany.

Benediktinerabtei Ottobeuren

The highlight of the complex is the magnificent **Basilika St Theodor und Alexander** (Basilica/Abbey Church). It received its present appearance in 1748-66 courtesy of Baroque architect Johann Michael Fischer. It has been described as his Wieskirche. The two 80-m/262-ft spires are the first sight in Ottobeuren no matter which approach road is used but, as with most Baroque churches, the real artistic merit is only visible inside. The nave is 36 m/118 ft high and 90 m/295 ft long.

Basilika St Theodor und Alexander *(Andreas Praefcke)*

The transept is 60 m/197 ft wide. It has four large domes – the largest is 25 m/82 ft high. The whole interior is flooded by light – in part due to the design but also because of its unusual north-south axis. This brilliantly lit the Rococo decorations, which are beautifully done. The frescoes are by Johann Jakob Zeiller and his cousin Franz Anton Zeiler, the sculptures by Johann Joseph Christian, and the stuccowork by Johann Michael Feichtmayr. Christian also carved the reliefs on the superb walnut choir stalls. Also, note the Romanesque *Ottobeurer Gnadenheiland* (Merciful Redeemer) crucifix from 1220 in the altar of the Holy Sacrament. The church is famous for its three organs. The two identical chancel organs are 85% original from 1766. They were built by Karl Joseph Riepp, a student of the famous organ builder Silbermann. The 20th-century main organ was rebuilt in 2002 and is frequently used for concerts. It is usually played on Saturday at 4 pm. The church is open daily from 9 am to sunset (latest 8:30 pm).

The adjacent **Abtei** (Abbey) is known as the "Escorial of Swabia." It is huge, measuring 480 by 430 m/1,575 by 1,410 ft. The present quadrilateral building with four cloisters was constructed in 1711-31. The whole monastery complex, as originally envisaged, represents Christ on the cross with the church as his slightly tilted head and the huge main buildings forming his chest area. Older maps and drawings show the structures that represented the arms and legs. The **Klostermuseum** (Monastery Museum) is in the abbatial palace and includes several superbly decorated rooms, as well as the magnificent

15,000-volume library and the Kaisersaal (Imperial Hall). The Kaisersaal has a fresco of the coronation of Charlemagne and 16 statues of the Habsburg emperors by Joseph Anton Sturm and his studio. The museum also houses the **Staatsgallerie Ottobeuren** (National Gallery) with mostly religious paintings by old German masters from the Swabian region. The museum is open daily from Easter to October, 10 am to noon and 2 to 5 pm. Phone for opening hours during winter – it is often open only on weekends. Admission is €2.

Ottobeuren is 12 km/7½ miles southeast of Memmingen. It can be reached in 15 minutes on Bus 955 – hourly on weekdays but less often on weekends.

Cultural Events

The cultural highlights in the region are the concerts held in **Ottobeuren** in the basilica and Kaisersaal. World-class musicians perform annually during the summer concert series and tickets sell out fast. The organ in the basilica is put through its paces on most Saturdays at 4 pm. Numerous other concerts are held in the basilica throughout the year. Tickets and details are available from the tourist office.

Annually, for three weeks in June and July, the **Memminger Meile** is held in the Old Town. It involves a range of cultural events, including plays, cabarets, concerts, and comedies, as well as art exhibitions.

Concerts, mostly of organ music, are frequently held in **St Martin**. The cloisters, churches, and monastery garden in **Buxheim** are also venues for numerous concerts. It is also worth attending concerts or exhibitions in the **Kreuzherrenkirche**, Hallhof 5, Memmingen. This former abbey church has a wonderful Baroque interior with stuccowork by Matthias Stiller and paintings in the style of Johann Baptist Zimmermann.

Festivals

Every four years (2008, 2012), Memmingen holds the **Wallerstein-Sommer** that commemorates the entry of Wallerstein into town. (It is highly doubtful that the locals were celebrating back in 1630!) The highlights are parades that involve up to 2,500 soldiers in period costume, 300 horses, and numerous coaches and wagons. Many cultural events and ample food and drink are part of the festivities.

Adventures on Foot

Town Walks

From May to October, the **tourist office in Memmingen** conducts guided walks on a wide range of themes. The tours are usually on Friday or Saturday at 11 am or 7 pm.

Adventures on Wheels

By Bicycle

Twice a week, guests are welcome to participate in free guided cycling tours in the Memmingen area. The tours are usually on Monday afternoon or Wednesday evening – more details are available from the tourist office.

Where to Stay & Eat

Memmingen

The **Parkhotel** is a modern hotel connected to the Stadthalle and close to the Marktplatz. Rooms are comfortably furnished with some double rooms sporting four-poster beds. The brasserie-style **Drexler** (€-€€) serves smaller dishes while the **Schwarzer Ochsen** (€-€€) is a traditional Bavarian inn with beer garden. Ulmer Straße 7, 87700 Memmingen, ☎ 08331-9320, fax 08331-48-439, www.parkhotel-memmingen.de. (€€-€€€)

Hotel Falken is a modern hotel but with a traditional gable in the center of the Old Town. Rooms are furnished in a rustic style. Rossmarkt 3-5, 87700 Memmingen, ☎ 08331-94-510, fax 08331-945-1500, www.hotel-falken-memmingen.de. (€€€)

In between the Marktplatz and the station in the Old Town is the very pleasant **Hotel Weisses Ross**. Although in a 16th-century building, all rooms are furnished individually with all modern comforts. Most rooms are very large with some having exposed wooden beams. The stylish **Ross** (€€) and rustic **Rossmarin** (€€), with vaulted ceiling, serve mostly Bavarian and Swabian food. Salzstraße 12, 87700 Memmingen, ☎ 08331-9360, fax 08331-936-150, www.hotelweissesross.de. (€€)

Weinstube Weber am Bach, Untere Bachgasse 2, ☎ 08331-2414, has been serving wine and food since the early 14th century and is the best choice in town for gourmet food. It serves mostly Swabian dishes. (€€-€€€)

Zum Goldenen Löwen, Schrannenplatz 2, ☎ 08331-5290, is a traditional restaurant with a lovely, rustic interior. Food is mostly fine local and Franconian cuisine to accompany the impressive wine list. (€€)

Zum Strauß, Ulmer Straße 13, ☎ 08331-4482, is near the Parishaus and reminiscent of an old Berlin Art Nouveau-style inn. Small dishes, including a large vegetarian selection, are served in the inn or its beer garden. (€-€€)

Ottobeuren

The modern **Hotel am Mühlbach** is in a U-shape around a pond south of the basilica. Rooms are bright and furnished in modern style. Many have balconies. Luitpoldstraße 57, 87724 Ottobeuren, ☎ 08332-92-050, fax 08332-859. www.hotel-am-muehlbach.de. (€€)

Hotel St. Ulrich is a modern hotel, beautifully located on the edge of a forest but with clear views across a meadow of the monastery complex. Rooms are tastefully decorated, some in a more rustic style. A huge range of Kneipp-spa treatments is available in the hotel. Bannwaldweg 10, 87724 Ottobeuren, ☎ 08332-923-520, fax 08332-923-5270, www.kneipp-und-kur.de. (€€)

The pleasant **Gasthof zum Mohren** is in a 400-year-old building in the heart of town. Rooms are modern and functionally furnished. The **restaurant** (€-€€) is an excellent choice, especially for Swabian dishes. Marktplatz 1, 87724 Ottobeuren, ☎ 08332-92-130, fax 08332-921-349, www.gasthof-mohren.de. (€€)

Youth Hostels

The **DJH Ottobeuren** is south of town in a recently refurbished building. It is closed from mid-December to January. Kaltenbrunnweg 11, 87724 Ottobeuren, ☎ 08332-368, fax 08332-7219.

Camping

Camping am See International is next to a lake just minutes away from Memmingen. It has good facilities but only 50 of the 150 lots are available for short-term campers. It is open from May to September. Am Weiherhaus 7, 87740 Buxheim, ☎ 08331-71-800, fax 08331-63-554, www.camping-buxheim.de.

Suggested Reading

Histories are generally controversial and those of Germany, especially when dealing with the 20th century, doubly so. The following works are fairly neutral but, of course, none are without their critics.

General German Histories

Cole, Robert. 2004. *A Traveller's History of Germany* (Interlink) – A fine summary of Germany's long, often confusing history.

Ozments, Steven. 2005. *A Mighty Fortress* (Harper Perennial) – Stronger scholarly credentials than the somewhat informal name suggests.

Fullbrook, Mary. 2004. *A Concise History of Germany* (Cambridge Concise Histories) – A short, scholarly overview of German history.

Schulze, Hagen. 2001. *Germany: A New History* (Harvard University Press) – 2,000 years of German history as interpreted by a respected German scholar.

Kitchen, Martin. 2000. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Germany* (Cambridge University Press) – A well-written history with lovely illustrations and maps.

Specialized Histories

Friedrich, Jorg. *The Fire: The Bombing of Germany, 1940-1945* (Columbia University Press) – A highly controversial book on the bombing of German cities and civilian targets. Best read in German (*Der Brand*), as the translation has been criticized.

Marcuse, Harold. 2001. *Legacies of Dachau: The Uses and Abuses of a Concentration Camp, 1933-2001* (Cambridge University Press) – A detailed work on probably the most controversial part of Bavaria.

Behringer, Wolfgang. 2003. *Witchcraft Persecutions in Bavaria* (Cambridge University Press) – A very comprehensive look at another dark chapter and often misunderstood feature of German (and European) history.

Brockmann, Stephen. 2006. *Nuremberg: The Imaginary Capital* (Camden House) – A look at the important role Nürnberg played as cultural and political center in the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation.

Numerous books have been written and several movies made about the Nürnberg Trials after World War II, ranging from legal studies to pure fiction. Two noteworthy works by American personnel involved at the trials are:

Sonnenfeldt, Richard. 2006. *Witness to Nuremberg* (Arcade Publishing) – An account by the American chief translator at the trials.

Goldensohn, Leon. 2005. *The Nuremberg Interviews* (Vintage) – By the American psychiatrist who interviewed the accused.

Judgment at Nuremberg (1961), with Spencer Tracy, Burt Lancaster, Maximillian Schell, and Marlene Dietrich, is the classic movie on the trials, while more recently Alec Baldwin and Jill Hennessy starred in *Nuremberg* (2000). Both movies mix truth with fiction but several documentaries are available, including the History Channel's *Nuremberg – Tyranny on Trial* (1995).

The ill-fated 1972 Olympic Games in Munich are similarly the setting for numerous books and films. The Spielberg movie *Massacre in Munich* (2005) is mostly on the aftermath, while *One Day in September* (1999), starring Michael Douglas, focuses more on the events in Munich itself.